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Christ of Latter-day saints Gift  
Pastoral manual


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## P R E F A C E

From time to time it is advisable to present to the priesthood of this church in compact form volumes which deal with their duties and relationships of one to another in the performance of their responsibilities. In the *Pastoral Manual* the work of the ministry in the branches and districts receives consideration and authoritative treatment, especially as this work relates to the program before the church in the next biennium. I commend the *Pastoral Manual* and also its counterpart in evangelism in the branch, the *Missionary Manual* to the priesthood of the church for their study and use.

*Frederick M. Smith*

*President of the Church.*

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## INTRODUCTION

As was to be expected, the intensive missionary work during 1940 and 1941 has emphasized the need for continuous pastoral administration to nurture those won to the cause of Christ. In every branch, wherever situated or however well administered, there is a tendency on the part of some to become inactive in the discharge of their church obligations, and this group constitutes a problem in pastoral ministry which cannot and should not be ignored. The newly won converts, the active members of more lengthy service in the church, and the inactive group just mentioned summarize the area of pastoral work to which constant attention must be given. In order to administer the task successfully, there is needed a plan, a personnel, and materials, or helps.

The plan is provided in the program of the general church. The personnel is at hand in the growing body of members and in the priesthood and departmental workers; and materials have been provided periodically in such forms as the General Conference classwork, the Clinic in Evangelism and its ensuing report of proceedings, the *Priesthood Journal*, the *Saints' Herald*, and in other ways. Now, this *Pastoral Manual* has been prepared for the priesthood of the church, to be studied concurrently with *The Missionary Manual*, for the purpose of guiding pastoral administration and helping to interpret to the church the program beginning April 6, 1942. First the priesthood themselves must become fully informed concerning the program, its requirements, and opportunities, and then they are prepared to offer a teaching and comforting ministry to the people. To this end *The Pastoral Manual* has been prepared.

### THE PROGRAM FOR THE TWO YEARS BEGINNING APRIL 6, 1942.

During the two years which came to a close as these lines were being written, the emphasis throughout the church has been upon missionary work and the continuance of the financial program in effect since February 12, 1932. The intensification of missionary work tended to increase the pastoral burden and the time is ripe for an addition to the objectives

previously in view. Therefore, for the Conference biennium beginning April 6, 1942, four points have been set up

1. The Evangelical Program is to be continued and expanded to the fullest extent possible.

2. In addition pastoral administration in all of its aspects is to receive the careful scrutiny and direction of general as well as local administrative officers and workers, looking toward more efficient service.

3. The emphasis upon the financial law is continued, first to enlarge the number of persons fully responsive thereto and, secondly, from the fruit of such response to finance the work of the general church as well as local activities, and finally, discharge all of the general church debt.

4. The faith and prayers of the people are to be rallied in constant support of the work of the church through church-wide fasting and prayer at such times as shall hereafter be designated and in other ways in order that the church program as a whole shall enjoy the blessings of our Heavenly Father, for without the light of truth, the warmth of love, and continuous imparting of spiritual power the hearts of men cannot be reached.

#### SIGNIFICANCE OF THE NEW PROGRAM

The program thus outlined should serve to strengthen the work of the ministry in their public activities as well as in the homes of the Saints. The inactive group should be substantially diminished. Baptisms should be increased and pastoral ministry generally made more helpful. Departmental strength should be increased, for in the fields occupied by the departments great opportunities for service exist. This is seen in the fact that from the church school ages come the majority of the baptisms of the church; from the ranks of Zion's League step the young people who are being prepared for wider service in the church; in the Women's Department are found the opportunities for the development of home life, the enriching of social experience and cultural development.

Realization of the significance of the program may come in part from meditation upon the various points involved, but substantially the most complete realization can come only as we work together in putting the program into effect.

## POINTS OF PASTORAL EMPHASIS

There are three points of pastoral emphasis upon which this *Manual* offers assistance. The first of these points is pastoral ministry in general. Under this head are considered all matters pertaining to the work of the pastor, duties of the priesthood, improvement of services through consecrated attention to music, public prayers, pulpit ministry, and such related concerns.

The second point relates to the departmental work. The departments are specialists in that each discharges a function for which it is designed. The pastoral arm of the church through this *Manual* is encouraged to make all possible use of the departments in furthering the discharge of their special functions and in co-ordinating their work, not only in missionary endeavors which should be constantly kept in mind, but also in their wide usefulness in nurturing the people of the church, whether newly won or members of long standing.

A third point of emphasis in pastoral administration is the ministry to the homes of the Saints. The family is the basic unit of society. From the home go its members to every phase of social endeavor—the children into the educational institutions of the land, the father, and sometimes the mother, into economic pursuits, and the family as a unit into the cultural and religious activities that serve to ennoble the country. There can be no more important place for church work than the family, for upon the stability of the family and its institutions rests the stability of the church as well as of the nation.

If the homes of the Saints are to become truly zionic in character, then there must be a constructive program of education and counsel guided by the pastoral ministry of the church by which means the end may be attained. We very definitely urge that the pastors' home visits as well as the visiting activities of deacons, teachers, and priests, be organized around definite objectives in full accord with the general program of the church. The *Priesthood Journal*, beginning with the April, 1942, number, will be used to offer constructive suggestions along this line from time to time, for though the desired results in Christian living are probably not to be found in regimentation, they probably do flow from carefully directed ministry which uses as the basis for its teaching and counseling the basic gospel of Jesus Christ.

Home ministry directed towards the achievement of specific goals may be illustrated by the following:

1. During June and December of each year the Presiding Bishopric guides the church in a review of the financial law. In branches this should be made the occasion for home visitation of deacons who are associated in financial duties. This should be true also of solicitors and frequently of other orders of the priesthood who are drawn into co-operative discharge of the responsibility these recurring semi-annual reviews entail. What is to be done should be first studied by those who are to go into the homes as visitors. Then the visits should be made, and, finally, reports and review of results with the pastor should follow.

2. The teachers have a primary responsibility in ministry to those who tend to become inactive in church work. In connection with the pastor, whether in branch priesthood meetings or otherwise, the reasons for nonattendance and inactivity should be carefully studied and understood. The teachers, assisted at times by deacons or by special helpers as may be determined in given cases, should carry out their home visitations in a constructive and co-operative spirit, looking towards the winning of all such persons to a normal activity in the church.

3. Home visitation by priests may be laid out also with definite objectives in view. Counseling in home problems is one aspect of the visits of the priest. The problems may differ widely from one family to another and therefore the needs of the family as understood to exist should be given consideration in this connection before a visit is made. Secondly, however, there is a wide range of development in zionic character stemming from the graces of Christian life. Peter's counsel (2 Peter 1: 5-9) is to add virtue to faith, and knowledge to virtue, and temperance to knowledge; patience to godliness, and to those brotherly kindness and charity, promising that if such things be in us and abound, we shall "neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ." Visits should be organized around the aspects of faith in home, community, and church life; likewise virtue, with all its significance in moral and spiritual life in the home and community should be similarly made the center of family visitation. This is true with respect to the other graces of the Spirit which

Peter here so effectively outlines. Throughout the church in the coming two years we ask the pastors to direct the home ministry of the priests towards visiting which is first prepared around some definite objective, such as the foregoing and is carried out in the home under conditions looking towards Christian helpfulness. By so doing the church should move towards attainment of zionic conditions in the homes, and the best possible basis for further steps in the development of Zion be thus laid. It should be remembered, however, that the qualities of Christian life are difficult to describe in objective terms. The spiritual outlook is something more than words or deeds and cannot be evoked by outward means. It is a result of the inner experience of each person who strives in himself first of all to put into effect the essential principles of Christ's way of living.

4. The pastor's home ministry itself should have a definite purpose in each case. In one instance it may be some family problem which has been referred to the pastor by other members of the priesthood because of his presumed ability to serve. Perhaps the pastor sees the need of bringing comfort to the home, because of the loss of some loved one or some other calamity which has befallen the family. Perhaps it is to encourage in the direction of broader activities in the church or the assumption of specific responsibilities by some member of the family. Whatever may be the purpose, the pastor's intention should be at all times to draw the family into closer participation in the complete program of the church and the raising of the standard of family life so as to cap the efforts of the other members of the priesthood who have labored in that family in specific ways connected with their ordained responsibilities.

#### STUDY CLASSES

Branch, district, and reunion priesthood gatherings should use *The Pastoral Manual* freely as a means of complete familiarization with the pastoral portions of the general church program. This course has also been recommended in connection with *The Missionary Manual* so that those concerned shall be broadly informed. Quorums of the priesthood wherever organized should also find particular value in such classwork because of the need of studying the responsibilities of the various orders of the priesthood, with respect to some specific

objective as outlined above, after which the members of those quorums who are participants in branch work under the guidance of constituted pastoral officers should put the things studied into specific application in the home visitation. By doing so, quorum programs will be directed towards matters immediately connected with the church program, which should serve to vitalize their work in a very splendid way

### LOOKING FORWARD

The church looks forward to the establishment of the kingdom of God or Zion and this objective has seldom been absent from the thinking of the people of the church from the beginning. It is more than putting into effect outward institutions represented by stewardship, the storehouse, the inheritance, or such things; it is the formation of the inward character so that whether in discharging the responsibility of stewardship in law, in business, art, education, the home, or in any other way, there shall be a purposeful living which by quickening social responsibility strengthens the bonds of brotherhood, eliminates poverty, assisting men and women to adjust themselves in useful pursuits. These are appropriate and splendid, but beyond them must always be a spiritual touch upon the things of life that brings man close to God.

Our church has constantly adhered to the principle that church and state be separate. Through mixing in worldly activities there may come to church men coarseness, defilement, a lowering perhaps of moral tone and a loss of spirituality manifested in close communion with God. However, it is the purpose of the church to so motivate men in noble living that they may be in the world without partaking of the iniquities of the world, that they may serve their fellow men of whatever race or condition without being contaminated by the evils which are everywhere present. The church is not engaged in making secular history, but is deeply concerned in the forming of the characters of men so that secular pursuits shall be influenced towards higher ground, wherein the principles of Christian living shall be constantly upheld by a righteous citizenship. Thus the indirect influence upon history becomes profound.

The trend of educational endeavors, of which *The Pastoral Manual* and *The Missionary Manual* are evidences, is not at long last to create a "professional" ministry which, because of its "professional" character, loses touch with the people,

but to so uplift the standard of service of the ministry that their hearts shall be constantly quickened and in touch with the currents of human life, exerting a healthy influence, speaking to men in their own language, expanding their ministry in a constantly broadening stream of service which holds before men the ideal of spiritual achievement which is not enslaved to, but is served by, temporalities. Perhaps it is best that we constantly have a large body of the priesthood of the church self-supporting and ministering as they have opportunity, for they may be able to serve in this complicated world with better appreciation of the central meaning of life than if they were not to have such contacts. This indirectly expresses a caution that always the full-time minister in the church shall exert himself to maintain full contact with the people. It was the tragedy of the Eastern church as distinct from the Roman church that its ministry drew apart in ritualistic services and contemplation of God until they lost contact with the realities of the world and the Roman church, entering into the world, for sometimes lengthy periods, became worldly. An active priesthood, participating in the world and in contact with the people, but at all times maintaining a spiritual and moral leadership, is able to point the people towards Christian ideals which, although never perhaps quite reached, lead them forward towards a constantly deepening pattern of spiritual life.

#### ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

For the preparation of *The Pastoral Manual* a committee was appointed consisting of Apostles Clyde F. Ellis, J. F. Garver, and G. G. Lewis, together with High Priest Ward A. Hougas, and the undersigned representing the First Presidency. The authors of specific chapters have not been shown. The First Presidency presents this *Manual* to the priesthood of the church as an official expression, looking towards successful prosecution of the program of the next two years. To the four men first mentioned and to all who assisted them in any way, is extended our deep appreciation for the practical and spiritual contribution they have made, and we trust that the result of their labor shall be a blessing to the church.

THE FIRST PRESIDENCY,  
By L. F. P. Curry.

## DEFINITIONS

*A Stake* is a major zionic unit composed of the members of the church living in a specified area and presided over by a stake presidency of three high priests—the Stake President and two counselors. As part of the organization there is required also a stake bishopric composed of a bishop and one or two counselors. To complete the organization, the Stake Presidency, and in some matters, the Stake Bishopric are assisted by a stake high council consisting of twelve high priests. Priesthood and departmental workers also assist in the carrying out of the work incidental to a stake.

Stakes are organized by authority of General Conference on recommendation of the presiding authorities of the church, nominations for stake president and for stake bishop and for a majority of the high council being made by the general presiding authorities and approved by the Stake Conference. The remaining stake officers are chosen on nomination by the Stake Presidency and approved by the Stake Conference. In matters affecting the Stake Bishopric, the stake bishop also nominates. Subsequent changes in the offices of stake president or of stake bishop are made on nomination by the general presiding authorities.

*A district* is an association of the branches and members of the church living in a specified area and presided over by a district president who is a member of the Melchisedec priesthood. The district president may be assisted by one or two other elders. When it is fully organized the district also includes a bishop and an evangelist, ordained and assigned by the general authorities of the church with the approval of the district conference. Districts are organized by authority of the

Presidency and Twelve, their boundaries being determined or adjusted on recommendation of the apostle in the field and approval of the Joint Council of First Presidency, Twelve, and Presiding Bishopric.

*A branch* is an association of not less than six members of the church, presided over by one of their number who is an elder, priest, teacher, or deacon. Branches are organized by general and district administrative authorities, membership in branches being determined by General Conference action which provides that members shall be enrolled with branches most convenient to their places of residence.

*Groups* of church members belonging to large branches are sometimes organized for administrative purposes under the immediate direction of a member of the priesthood. Such groups are not branches, but are administrative units of branches. They are subject to the direction of the branch administration.

*Apostolic Missions:* The districts and unorganized territories of the United States and Canada and foreign countries are organized for administrative purposes into "Missions," the size and number of which vary at the discretion of the First Presidency, who determine their boundaries and assign the members of the Twelve who work in them. These Missions, foreign or domestic, usually carry the name of their geographic location, e.g., The Central States Mission, The Great Lakes Mission, The European Mission, The Australasian Mission, et cetera.

*District Missions:* Members of the church lacking leadership and experience in church affairs and too remote from any branch to be effectively associated therewith, may be organized into a "district mission" by the apostle in the field or by the district authorities with

the knowledge and consent of the apostle in the field, and placed under the direction of a member of the priesthood who is in turn subject to direction by the district or general authorities as may be determined.

*Branch Missions:* For purposes of church extension, or in order to minister more effectively to members enrolled with a branch but living at a distance therefrom, the administrative officers of a branch may organize a mission directed by a member of the priesthood who is the representative of the branch administration and who continues in office at the discretion of the branch administration. Members of the church should not agree to meet at times and places convenient to them and then organize themselves for such meetings, but if necessary should request branch authorities to perfect a suitable organization. As the members of missions mature in understanding of church ideals and procedure and as local leadership becomes available, these members should be consulted more and more fully regarding mission affairs, but a mission is nevertheless under the direction of the branch president until it is itself organized into a branch.

*Mission Church Schools:* Where members of the church and their children and friends desire to study the faith of the church but no members of the priesthood are available, or a mission organization is not feasible, they may be organized for church school purposes by general or local administrative authorities, or with their prior knowledge and consent. Supervision of such church schools should be by those properly chosen or appointed, but such immediate supervisors are directly responsible to the president of the district or branch concerned.

*Isolated Saints:* Church members who live too far from each other to be associated with branches or mis-

sions may be able to meet at convenient centers for occasional services. Such services should be arranged wherever possible by the mission or district authorities concerned.

*New openings* involve the good name of the church and draw on the resources of the church for their maintenance. Wisdom and experience are required to determine whether such openings will add to or detract from the total church effectiveness. New openings should only be established, therefore, after consultation with the local and general administrative authorities involved and with their full consent and support.

## THE BRANCH AND ITS PURPOSE

THE branch is the church functioning in a given community. It is the primary unit of the church in outlying areas.

### THE GENESIS OF THE BRANCH

It is a matter of record that the early elders of the Restoration were commanded to go "forth from Kirtland into the regions westward," and to "build up the church" wherever received.<sup>1</sup> And in these areas to sustain it until the time and place of the gathering were revealed, and preparation made for its consummation. It was in response to this direction of Deity branches were in those days raised up in various places.

In Zion and regions round about where the Saints are so closely drawn together and in such numbers as to admit of functioning as designed in the law of the gathering, the branch gives way to the stake organization, for benefit of closer co-ordination of effort, and of centrally directed administration of the affairs of the kingdom by its constituted officers. Here the stake is the primary unit of organization.

So it was that following the dispersion of the Saints from Missouri, beginning in 1833, and the consequent disruption and delay of the gathering, the church came to have branches over a wide area, and has to this day.

This treatise on pastoral administration is directed to the branch as a convenience in discussion, it being understood the principles involved have application in the various congregations of the stake and of the center-place, and for that matter in missions everywhere, insofar as the set-up in each may allow or make practicable.

## THE PURPOSE OF THE BRANCH

As has been observed, the branch is the church functioning in a given community within the range of its jurisdiction and power of ministry. It is, therefore, clear the purpose of the branch is none other than the purpose of the church.

And it is made as clear in our Standard Books, the function of the church is to contribute to the growing life of its people and all people.

It was with reference to this purpose of the church Jesus said, "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly."<sup>2</sup>

It was in addressing himself to the same purpose of the church, Peter encouraged the saints of his day to "Add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, charity."<sup>3</sup>

And it was with this same purpose on his heart of growing life in the saints of those days, Paul imposed upon the priesthood of the church the obligation to lead the people in perfecting their lives, by means of a unifying faith, an expanding knowledge, a stabilizing of personality, and a labor of love on their own part, in emulation of the life and good works of the Lord Jesus, in whom was the way thus made clear.<sup>4</sup>

It was looking forward to this kind of achieved life in the saints of his day, Alma admonished his people to nourish the word they had received, as if it were a good seed planted in their life, and it would grow in their life fruits of proficiency and of satisfaction.<sup>5</sup>

It was towards this more abundant life the Saints of latter days were adjured, "If thou lovest me, thou shalt serve me and keep all of my commandments,"<sup>6</sup> with promise of righteous achievement in material as well as in spiritual things.

It was after this manner the word became flesh in the person of the Christ "and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth,"<sup>7</sup> for it was even so, that through his full obedience to the word, or way of life, the very flesh of him in consonance with the spirit and as governed thereby, came to fulfill, therefore to make understandable the meaning or import of the word.

It is towards this kind of corporate as well as individual life and witness Deity presses in the promise of these last days, "Zion shall flourish, and the glory of the Lord shall be upon her, and she shall be an Ensign unto the people, and there shall come unto her out of every nation."<sup>8</sup>

Herein therefore lies a twofold function of the branch:

1. To draw men and women to the church by grace of good life; and
2. To build the Christ character into so many as respond to this high purpose of the gospel.

The branch then is to so minister the word that in all Saints it may become flesh, and dwell in the midst of earth full of grace and truth, as a witness and working power in salvation of others.

#### IN SIMPLIFICATION OF THE BRANCH PURPOSE

To simplify it by restating our reasoning, may it be said this way: The purpose of the branch is to contribute to the growth of a well-rounded-out manhood—a man who can stand on his own two feet, look life in the eye, maintain his equilibrium in time of stress, find his way about in an uncertain world, provide himself and dependents a livelihood, deal justly with his neighbor, discharge faithfully his obligations and privileges as a citizen and community builder, and in participation with his fellows bring out of chaos an economic, a social,

and a political order guaranteeing to those who come after him their full heritage.

Than this there is no other purpose in earth for the branch. The branch is to minister the word in the life of, and to supply leadership for all Saints in constructive works, to their own salvation, and to salvation of many.

- 
1. *Doctrine and Covenants* 42 3.
  2. John 10 10.
  3. 2 Peter 1: 5-7.
  4. Ephesians 4 11-16.
  5. Alma 16 149-173.
  6. *Doctrine and Covenants* 42: 8.
  7. John 1: 14.
  8. *Doctrine and Covenants* 64 8.

## THE FRAMEWORK OF THE BRANCH

FOR long we as a people have held that the substantial framework of the branch for its proficient functioning is in its priesthood.

This interpretation is clearly expressed in *Rules of Order and Debate*, edition of 1904. As here stated, the branch is said to be "fully organized when it has a presiding elder, a priest, a teacher, and a deacon," and, incidentally, or only for sake of a proper record, etc., a secretary or secretaries "who may or may not be ordained ministers of any grade."<sup>1</sup> And this declaration as to framework is made under the carefully selected sidehead, *Complete Branch Organization*.

The only other reference herein made to the framework of the branch is to the effect that shall necessity in the matter of numbers to be served or other consideration require, two or more of each or of either grade of the ministry may be ordained and set to work in the branch.

### PRIESTHOOD AND THE BRANCH

The constitutional law of the church provides that, "A branch may be presided over by a high priest, an elder, priest, teacher, or deacon."<sup>2</sup>

It is the further provision of the constitutional law that, "The Melchisedec priesthood holds the right of presidency, and has power and authority over all of the affairs of the church, in all ages of the world, to administer in spiritual things."<sup>3</sup>

It was with respect to these constitutional provisions the late Joseph Smith as president of the church declared that priesthood is "endowed with all the rights, privileges, and authority to bring forth the church of Christ,

conduct its expansion, and watch over its development and welfare."<sup>4</sup>

It is the clear intent of the law the branch and all appertaining thereto shall be presided over, provided for, and administered by priesthood.

It is in the light of this provision we interpret the words *fully organized* to mean the branch is organized for its best work when it has available in its ranks competent and functioning ministers of each priesthood, in each office, from the Melchisedec down through the various grades of the Aaronic; and this for the reason that whereas all ministers alike have some duties in common, or that each is to discharge, each has his own peculiar or particular work to do, without which there cannot be full ministry to all Saints. The work to be done by the branch calls for proficient ministry as to quality, adequacy of numbers, and completeness as to grade.

#### THE PRESIDING ELDER AND THE BRANCH

There is furthermore far-reaching significance in the term *presiding elder*—used in this discussion to refer to the presiding elder, or high priest in large branches,<sup>5</sup> as the case may be.

In the Melchisedec priesthood as we have seen, runs the responsibility to preside. And it shall be so, "all other things being equal," the Aaronic priesthood finding its function in ministry to the life of the Saints as supervised and led by the Melchisedec, or, to be exact, by the presiding elder.

This does not mean that no member of the Aaronic order can preside where there is a minister of the Melchisedec resident in the branch, since all other things might not be equal. Indeed, in the matter of capability alone there might be such disparity as to suggest that a man of the Aaronic order preside. Here, is, however,

a decision usually calling for co-ordination with district and, it may be, general church officers; and one when made and conveyed to the branch by superior officers it is as a rule wise to follow. The law directs, however, that all other things being equal, the elder shall preside.<sup>6</sup>

## COUNSELORS AND COUNCILS OF EXPEDIENCY

As a matter of expediency, when such arrangement has been regarded as likely to be helpful, a counselor, or counselors to the presiding elder have been, and may be provided. This practice, however, is not to be universally followed. Counselors are not a constitutional provision for the branch, and are to be resorted to only when men of qualification and rating among the Saints are available, when it is anticipated their addition to the branch presidency may work to some good purpose; and when the number of people to be served and the amount of work to be done justify.

The provision for the presiding elder and his functioning being a provision of, and the only provision of, the constitutional law of the church as pertaining to executive functioning, he should be sustained and permitted to function as such executive. This means that if and as counselors are considered desirable and are chosen, they are to function as such; they are not to usurp the office of presiding elder, emasculate it by majority vote, or otherwise dominate the presidency of the branch. They are only to serve as counselors, not as if they were the presiding elder. The presiding elder is the executive of the branch, and must be left free to function as such.

This leads to another consideration, i.e., to the so-called branch council, and to the departmental workers composing the same. These workers and each of them, as does this council, come under the provision for "helps,"<sup>7</sup> as referred to by the Apostle Paul, and this

is just what they are. They should not be made to be less, nor allowed to be more.

It is a matter for regret and for concern that in some branches the presiding elder or officer of lesser rank is not proficient. No good purpose is to be served, however, by this council or by a departmental helper or helpers taking over the presidency of the branch by remote control. Incompetency in the presiding officer is bad enough. A setting aside, in effect, of the constitutional officer and an assumption of the office by some other or others not provided for in the law, is worse, if not disastrous.

There was before there ever came to be a council composed of the presiding elder and departmental helpers, a council available to the presiding elder, and from which when he appreciated its potency, he was wont to get some good results, both by way of suggestion, advise and information, and by way of its members carrying from him to the Saints, branch policies, program, and endeavors, and general church policies, program, and endeavor as well. This council is still available, and is not to be shouldered to one side, either by the council of departmental helpers, or by the presiding elder. Indeed, it may be made to serve a purpose no other group is capable of, and should be used to capacity.

The group referred to is the group of priesthood within the branch. This group, no more than is that of the departmental helpers, is not to presume on functions it has not; for it is no more than a source of information and counsel for the presiding elder, and a ministering force in association with him among the people. It has no legislative, administrative, or executive function. It should undertake none, but content itself with counsel given, and in otherwise assisting as requested and as the way may open for it to do.

## PRESIDENCY AND PRIESTHOOD

The wise presiding elder seeks help of his immediate associates and of all associates. He gives full consideration to suggestions and council and advice, from whatever source. He has regard for others' opinion, and as may be well to do and he can do without compromise with error or ill-advised procedure, he may yield to pressure of such. He, however, who understands the constitutional provisions in the office, yields not its scepter to another; not that he is a man ambitious for power, or in any way dictatorial, but because he appreciates that the purposes of the branch can be achieved only as it operates constitutionally. He is the dominant administrative minister, and the sole executive minister of the branch, and his must be the decisions, and his the leadership.

The presiding elder, though dominant in the branch, is not a law to himself. He, too, is subject to superior constitutional leadership in his executive functioning. Being the branch executive, he it is who, in consultation with his associates and with councils as provided, and drawing on suggestions as made, plans the branch program, and leads out in its execution. Since, however, as has been observed in a former discussion, "the purpose of the branch is none other than the purpose of the church,"<sup>8</sup> the basic branch program is the program of the general church, as determined by its general officers, councils, and conferences. All branch programs and activities, therefore, are to be planned in harmony therewith, and co-ordinated therewith, with a view to stressing and carrying forward the program of the church.

This discussion opened with a reference to priesthood. Its purpose can be no better served than to close it on this high plane. The ordained ministers of the church are the shepherds and leaders of its people in drawing them under the provisions and processes of the law of

their life, and they work best together as their endeavors are co-ordinated in a common cause by direction of the branch executive, the presiding elder.

The framework of the branch is a provision of simplicity, yet of potency. Herein priesthood functions in the consciousness that upon the proficiency and faithfulness and leadership of the ordained ministers of the branch is dependent the life of the Saints. As therefore, priesthood "grows in grace and in knowledge of the truth," so the Saints and the branch grow in life, even into Zion, and as a witness to many of the power of righteousness to save from sin unto salvation.

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1. *Rules of Order and Debate*, p. 3.
  2. *Doctrine and Covenants* 120· 2.
  3. *Ibid.* 104. 3.
  4. *Saints' Herald*, volume 49, p. 497.
  5. *Doctrine and Covenants* 120· 2.
  6. *Ibid.* 120· 2; 122· 8
  7. 1 Corinthians 12. 28.
  8. *The Branch and Its Purpose*.

## THE DEVELOPMENT OF PRIESTHOOD

THE preceding discussion of the purpose and framework of the branch leads quite naturally to a consideration of priesthood.

As has been suggested, in the branch are brought together members and ordained men of the church in a relationship of minister and ministered to, making for unfolding life in Saints and participants, individually and collectively, and for strength of testimony of the power of the gospel to save from sin unto righteousness.

This consummation presupposes, therefore, an ordained ministry capable of full contribution to the life of the people, able administration of the affairs of the kingdom, and an aggressive leadership in evangelistic endeavor adequate to the needs of the age.

Here is a challenge calling for a quality of life, a proficiency of ministry, and a sustained effort of high intelligence commensurate with the purposes of the Restoration movement.

What, then, is there to do but to redouble our efforts in the building of such a priesthood, seeing as yet we have attained it only in part.

### A WORK FOR ALL HANDS

It remains, therefore, for all hands who by calling and ordination and opportunity may have part in this much needed work to go to with might and main in sustained contribution towards a fully qualified ministry.

This is particularly a task for leadership.

It is a task for all who by leaders are asked to help in the field of teaching.

It is a task for the church school, and for Zion's League, and for the Boy Scouts, and for every help

of the church contributing to growth of life in boys and men of the church.

It is a task for each man on his own initiative who regards himself as likely to be called upon, or who has been called upon to bear the responsibilities of priesthood; who on his own initiative should apply himself to prayer, to meditation, to study, to observation, and to such as he may be permitted to do in active ministry, toward the development of powers by which to serve both the Saints and the cause.

It is a task for Graceland College.

### THE CHALLENGE OF PRIESTHOOD

Let it be kept in mind we are not devoting ourselves here to some narrow concept of ministry. Ours is a profession that calls not only for the lesser ministries that on occasion are required in the day to day life of a people. Ours is a profession having its roots deep down in the life of our people, with a view to molding them and leading them in clear thinking, in righteous living, and in capability to achieve, and in achieving the full purpose of the Restoration. With a view to leading them in physical, in moral, in intellectual, in cultural, and in spiritual life towards the Christ character, and as a proselyting force carrying the gospel to every nation, people, and kindred, and in every tongue.

Here, then, is a calling, requiring as we have been adjured: a knowledge of languages, of peoples, of customs, of laws and of historical background, of diplomacy, and of international practices and world politics; and on the home front a knowledge of economics, of sociology, of business, of industry, of commerce, and of the professions; and a specific knowledge of the people with whom leadership is to work in the church, and whom they are to stimulate to their part in learning, in living, in loving, and in serving as stewards in all these

fields. For only so may Zion be achieved, and her purposes executed in all the earth.

### THE BEGINNING OF PRIESTHOOD

It is a function of priesthood to lead out in all plans and undertakings for all this. The approaches, however, must needs be practicable. We are, therefore, not to overlook the A B C's or the first works in preparation for priesthood. And mark it well, there is in these first works considerable for us to do.

The beginning of development in priesthood is care in the calling and ordaining of men. Those responsible, therefore, should recommend for ordination only men of good character, who are of the spirit of the movement and devoted to its advancement, and then only after careful check on their qualifications and potentialities to serve increasingly in the offices to which they are to be set apart. After clear light the time has fully come for the ordination, and after the procedure prescribed has been observed in spirit as in letter and ready approval has been had on the part of superior officers, branch and conference.

Then once one is ordained, he should be assigned work to do in the line of his calling. Ordination presupposes activity in the priesthood functions imposed. If there is no intention in a well-laid plan to put one to work, or no work to be done, or that he can do in the office, then one ought not be ordained.

This entails management with a view to using to capacity not only newly-ordained men, but also every man of the ordained ministry. For it is to this end men are ordained, to go and serve the Saints; where there is no serving of the Saints, there is no ordination in effect; and there is no ordination in full effect, unless or until the presiding elder of the branch, and it may be of the district or stake, gives intelligent di-

rection to full engagement of each ordained man of the group.

A lot of advice has been given through the years as to the necessity of study on the part of ordained men. This has been good advice. Nor is it the purpose here to do anything other than to supplement or add to advice given to study. It must be said, however, that not all the study of all the men of all time towards development of priesthood can help the least bit, only as studying men go to serving the people.

Nor is this all: One may learn more, for instance, in one evening of doing visiting, than he can in a score of evenings sitting in his study, studying about how to visit, or in some class or priesthood meeting listening to someone else telling him how to visit. One learns best how to do by doing the thing for which by study he has been in part qualifying to do.

The learning and the growing man is the active man.

Nor is one ever to become proficient as a minister to his people unless he studies his work in the matter of its practical application. He must study methods, and apply them, whether in preaching, teaching, visiting, or in keeping a fire. One cannot do well in his work who does as the deacon did, who gave much time in scientific approach to the matter of ventilation, and what have you, but who left the furnace to clog up with soot until it exploded from accumulation of gas and put the meeting place in such a mess there could be no services held there that day. One must qualify for a practicable service to the people.

### PRIESTHOOD CALLS FOR CHARACTER

Then there are the broader fields of character and of personality out of which to contribute not theory alone, but life. One becomes most proficient in serv

ice to others as he gives *himself* at his best in service to them.

Basic, then, in the development of priesthood is the development of character.

To be an effectual minister one must be a good man. In the Christian ministry there is no substitute for righteousness. The effectual minister is right at heart, therefore right in thought and in deed, a potent force for good among his people.

To be an effectual minister one must be sincere. He must be sincere for his own best efforts, and for best appeal to his constituency. The sincere minister is genuinely for his people and cause, therefore as a magnet draws to itself steel, he draws his fellows into association with himself in every good way.

To be an effectual minister one must have convictions. He must have convictions about the majesty of God, and about his purpose in human experience; about man's worth-whileness and his potentiality; about the church as an agency of Deity in man's growing life; about the Restoration Movement as the means of heaven for benefit of earth in this dispensation; and about the power of the people to achieve its purpose under his leadership and that of his fellow leaders.

To be an effectual minister one must be susceptible to the Christian emotions; he is the kind of man who instinctively hates sin for what it is—a deadly thing—and for what it does to his people. He instinctively loves righteousness for what it is—a goodly thing—and for what it does for his people.

To be an effectual minister one must be master of himself. He is the kind of man who as a normal movement of his life has himself under control, and thereby others under control. Commanding himself, he commands situations as they may arise, or as he may choose to bring them to the fore. He, as master of himself,

determines levels from which to operate—of respectability, of dignity, of prudence, and of consideration—therefore of growing mastery of his associate Saints over themselves.

In the development of priesthood, then, we are to keep in mind the basic matter of character and of personality as well, for in personality lies the adaptability and in character the force of full life in ministry to others. It is the *man* who gives direction to his skills, and it is *the* man who commands respect of his people and their response in the things left them to do.

### SOME SUGGESTIONS AS TO HELPS

For men already ordained there are helps in the form of classwork, priesthood meetings, institutes, reunions, clinics, and conferences, and where these are provided, there are quorums.

For one not yet ordained there may be pre-ordination classes, as are conducted in some of our centers. Unordained men, too, may have access to conferences, etc.

For all who can avail themselves thereof, there are day schools, and night schools and colleges and universities.

For every man there are correspondence schools, and home studies without end.

For every man there are the helps in our church books and brochures, in our publications, and quarterlies, and in particular in our manuals and *Priesthood Journals*.

And let each take to heart that when all is said and done, or nothing is said or done, after all, his is the initiative in actual work of preparation to serve. The first elder in the Restoration had no helps other than his own initiative. Many first elders in many places since have had little more. And many are they who have come to the fore in general church work and offices who in early days of life and of ministry had little in

the way of help. Helps are a help, but they are not all. One must help himself. And this he must do with persistence, if he would succeed, if he has no one to help him, or many people to help him.

There is in one's development as indicated, the need to keep always in mind the matter of his widening range of learning as a background, and his specific learning for working in the particular field to which he has been, or may be assigned. One must, however, keep also in mind the matter of how he is to perform this ministry; and the *how* of which, let him not overlook, shall be about as *he* is.

This raises the matter of agreeableness of personality—of personal appearance, of appropriateness of dress, for whatever occasion, of the smoothness of one's approach, of his execution, and of his "closing the deal."

So very much depends upon the impression one is to make, on the respect his people may have for him as a person; on the confidence they have in him as to reliability of information; and on his ability to "put it over," as we say. He must therefore build himself into a man at once acceptable and agreeable and proficient as to powers of expression, as well as to content of word and of ministry.

An example of what is meant here is had in latter-day instruction to the ministry of the church who are counseled that "they shall lay aside lightness of speech and lightness of manner when standing to declare the word, and shall study to approve their ministrations to the people by candor in speech and courtesy in demeanor, that as ministers of the gospel they may win souls unto Christ."<sup>1</sup>

Then there is the particular problem of how one is to say what he has to say, as to words, and pronunciation, and construction, and voice, and emphasis, and as to impressiveness. One's earnestness may carry him a

long way. It cannot, however, compensate for definite, and it may be, repelling ways, or for one's killing of the King's English. Grammar, therefore, and rhetoric, and public speech, and poise, and personal appearance, and adaptability may be among the things in which one needs to qualify.

It does make a tremendous difference how one says a thing, and how he appears in saying it, wheresoever it may be, and whatsoever the situation or circumstances. This is particularly true of what one may have to say in gospel work, and how he appears in saying it. He must build himself a vehicle by which to express the truth effectually.

To be the kind of man to do well, readily, and agreeably what he has to do, goes a long way toward success in whatever profession. Nor is there any profession in which these qualities are so necessary as in the profession of the Christian ministry.

## THE TRAINING OF INDIVIDUAL MINISTERS

Responsibility for organized effort in training for development of priesthood centers in all presiding elders of branch, district, stake, mission and general church, and in all presidents of quorums.

Each man is to be trained to serve in his own field of ministry: The elder in his, the priest in his, the teacher in his, and the deacon in his. This requires special courses for each as pertaining to his own work, and a general study of the whole of the field of ordained ministry. This latter is the over-all view, and to relate each in his work to the work of his fellows of other rank in a way to correlate their work to his, and his to theirs, for best results and benefit of the people.

The elder, therefore, is to be trained by study and actual service under supervision, as an "overseer," and a feeder "of the flock of God."<sup>2</sup> It is to this purpose of

growing life in the Saints he is to preach, teach, expound, and exhort, and to "watch over the church,"<sup>3</sup> "conducts its meetings,"<sup>4</sup> and "administer in spiritual things."<sup>5</sup>

It is to this purpose and in this same manner the priest is to be trained under supervision, to "assist the elder," and whose particular obligation it is to "visit the house of each member exhorting them to pray . . . and attend to all family duties."<sup>6</sup>

Likewise is the teacher to be trained under supervision, to "watch over the church" that no evil enter into any, and to strengthen each and all in saintliness. And since much good comes from regular attendance at services of the church, he is to cast his influence in the direction of the house of God, by encouraging all Saints to attend, and by himself attending regularly.<sup>7</sup>

It is to these purposes in the life of all Saints the deacon is to be trained in service under supervision, as an assistant to the teacher, to usher and look to the comfort and decorum of the people in their public assemblies, to keep their place of meeting, and as may be assigned him, to gather and administer finances, and otherwise to serve in connection with the physical set-up of the church.<sup>8</sup>

Ordained ministers become capable to serve in the purposes of their calling only by study, and prayer, and in actual long-time service under supervision, in the work of the office to which they have been ordained.

At this point rises a common error. As soon as one becomes competent in a given office, and sometimes even before, someone is likely to suggest he is now ready for moving along to an office of higher grade, or priesthood, as the case may be. Now the way to make a good deacon is not by way of his ordination to the office of teacher. Nor is it the way to make a good teacher, by promotion of an indifferent deacon to that office.

Men grow to be proficient as they serve over a period of years in a given office. We shall be wise in administration of light received, if for some it is permitted that they serve all their days in a given office; and hereby is capability built in the life of a man, and made effectual in service to many. It is well to recognize this, and to so administer the law of calling and ordaining as not to do violence to its intent in the life of the people.

### THE TWOFOLD FUNCTION OF PRIESTHOOD

It is for administrative officers also to keep in mind the function of priesthood in a twofold ministry: In the development of the Saints, and in the preaching of the gospel to their friends and neighbors, and to the world.

For this latter, as for the former, ordained men are to be trained, both to themselves serve, and to lead the Saints in local evangelistic endeavor, and in contribution to the general church as a proselyting organization.

And let all understand that as the Saints participate in missionary activity, they grow the more ready in support of the church, as in Christian life.

Ours is an ordained ministry having its rise in the purpose of Deity in man's life and development to the full of potentiality; and its proficiency in the growing powers of the minister, as these are developed, organized, brought into service, and given intelligent direction in other's behalf.

Here is a ministry not learned from books, or brochures, or from schools, or colleges, or from classes, or conventions, or conferences, or clinics alone, helpful though these may be. It is one acquired in the school of experience, in a ministry to men and women and boys and girls of the church, and not of the church.

It is a ministry calling for a quality of life and a pro-

iciency to be achieved only by intelligent, painstaking and persistent response to one's opportunities and obligations; for it grows in one in powers to serve in direct ratio to his activity in actual service to his people and to all people, as it does in ratio to his sustained efforts toward self-improvement.

Here is a ministry the function of which is to lead its people and all people in unfolding life and achievement of the divine purpose in all the earth.

### OURS IS AN EXPANDING MINISTRY

Here is a ministry based on an authority broader than legal right of the call to serve. It is a ministry requiring also the moral right to serve in the stead of, and to speak for God; its is the authority of righteousness; its is the authority of sincerity; its is the authority of devotion; its is the authority of clear vision; its is the authority of competence; its is the authority of sound judgment and of wise and just administration of the affairs of the kingdom of God.

Here is a ministry calling for understanding, and consideration, and heart, and labor of love—in a word, for a manhood yet to be fully attained in this dispensation.

Ours it is, therefore, to grow a priestly man of worthiness and of capability to lead the Saints in growing life, even unto Zion, and back again into the world in moving testimony of the grace of the gospel to save.

### PRIESTHOOD IS OUR FIRST WORK

Here is a work centering in the branch as the primary unit of the church in outlying areas, in the stake under law of the gathering, and in the center place, and particularly in the center place as the example in all things, and in its laying of the foundation for Zion.

It is the first work of the presiding elder—of the

first or chief presiding elder, on down through the presiding elder of the mission, of the stake, of the district, and of the branch.

It is the first and only work of the presidents of local quorums.<sup>9</sup>

The development of priesthood is the first work of the church, and the basis for its achievement of the divine purpose in the lives of men and women at home and abroad.

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1. *Doctrine and Covenants* 119. 2

2. Acts 20 28.

3. *Doctrine and Covenants* 52 9.

4. Ibid. 17: 9.

5. Ibid. 104: 7.

6. Ibid. 17: 10.

7. Ibid. 17: 11.

8. Ibid. 17. 11.

9. Ibid. 104. 38-40.

# THE DUTIES OF THE BRANCH PRIESTHOOD\*

## THE STANDING MINISTER

"THE elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder. . . . Feed the flock of God which is among you, . . . not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock. And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away."<sup>1</sup>

"Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock over which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood."<sup>2</sup>

"The Twelve and Seventy are traveling ministers and preachers of the gospel, to persuade men to obey the truth; the high priests and elders holding the same priesthood are the standing ministers of the church, having the watchcare of the membership and nurturing and sustaining them, under the direction and instruction of the Presidency and the Twelve."<sup>3</sup>

If the general organization of the church, with its First Presidency, apostles, seventies, high priests, bishops, and other officers, is admirable, the organization of the local church or branch is no less admirable.

High priests, elders, priests, teachers, and deacons constitute a working force of the "standing ministry" to administer the affairs of the local church and help build up the kingdom of God and establish his righteousness.<sup>4</sup>

## THE BRANCH PRESIDENT

### *To Preside:*

It may seem to be a truism to say that the branch president is to preside. But we mean that he is to

preside in fact, and not in theory only. He is at the head of affairs, not the figurehead.

All lines of activity in the branch should be gathered up and center in the hands of the branch president—though we do not mean that he should be an autocrat. The admirable features of the branch organization appear when we reflect that with him are men who function in various departments of local church work. There are the priests, assisting him in all his duties, and moving among the Saints in house to house visiting, strengthening, exhorting, and preaching. There are the teachers, watching over the morals of the people, that iniquity may not abound; encouraging the church attendance, admonishing, exhorting, and if need be assisting to prune the vineyard of the Lord. Then there are deacons, looking after the comfort of the congregation when assembled in the church building, as well as administering the financial affairs of the branch.

#### *Relationship to Local Priesthood:*

The branch president presides over these men as truly as he presides over the membership. To him they report. Yet he is not to be a despot. He should be a leader, not a driver. He should hold these men to him in the work by the power of love and sympathy and good fellowship.

He should consult with them, not only in private conversation with them individually, but also in the priesthood meetings, where they may meet to talk over important affairs of the branch. Thus he secures their fellowship and the aid of their counsel. Thus he is able to use the initiative of all the local priesthood and secure the benefit of their thoughts and ideas. Thus all may work together harmoniously, with concerted action.

Yet after all he is at the head. There must be a program which must be that of the general church. This program represents the activities and policy of the local

church. The branch selects him to administer that program. He should have the courage and initiative to carry it out. He must shape the course of his own administration. He must learn to listen to men, get all the good he can from their advice, make up his mind carefully, with prayer, reach a decision, and then stand by it. A vacillating leader is always unsuccessful.

The branch president should study parliamentary law carefully and be able to direct a business meeting in a legal, orderly, and efficient manner. More than his own dignity is at stake in this.

We have been asked: "Should the presiding elder appoint speakers and those who are to have charge of prayer meetings, or should he leave all such matters to the vote of the priesthood meeting and abide their decision?" It occurs to us that the answer is found in the law.<sup>5</sup>

In this article, we are supposing, all the way through, that the branch president is an elder or high priest. In those branches where the president is a priest, teacher, or deacon, the pastoral functions devolve upon him, so far as the limitations of his priesthood permit him to perform them. The branch president, or presidency, as the case may be, should make the appointments referred to above.

### *As a Pastor:*

The branch president is to be a pastor to the people under his charge. That is a high and exacting calling. Jesus instructed Peter to feed His sheep, and to feed the lambs, also. Peter passed the instruction on to the elders in the Scriptural reading quoted at the head of this chapter.

This feeding may be done in part from the pulpit. It is greatly to the advantage of the branch president if he be a good preacher. We may scoff at those who are always clamoring for a "good speaker." But the fact

remains that, whatever a man does, it is a fine thing for him to do it well. If the branch president is a good speaker, it but adds to his power; it enlarges the area of his influence for good.

By the term "*good speaker*," we do not mean a mere entertainer. We mean one who can do more than entertain. One who can both hold interest and give something worthy of that interest. One who can instruct and build up. One who can break the bread of life to those under his ministry.

### *"Preach the Gospel":*

The minister should not forget that all his preparation of prayer and study and fasting, even of sermon analysis, but leads up to the preaching of the gospel, not the presentation of personal hobbies, or passing fads, or schoolroom theses. Fads pass; the gospel endures. Preach the gospel.<sup>6</sup>

### *As a Visiting Officer:*

The work of the pastor is not confined to the pulpit. He must visit the Saints in their homes and get close to them as individuals. He is with them in times of sickness, and in times of poverty, and in times of death. He strengthens and sustains them at such times by his faith, advice, and works. And at such times he gets closer to them than he ever can while preaching from the pulpit. His most fertile field is found in the homes of the Saints.

If possible to do so the pastor should have regular hours for study and visiting. But he should be ready to go when there is a real need for him in the homes of his people. Thus he gets a "hand hold" on their hearts and can draw them toward God and safety in times of danger. They should know him not alone as their teacher, but as their friend.

### *To Guard the Flock:*

He is to guard the flock against all influences that would destroy it. He is to guard the flock against false teaching and false doctrine that might tend to corrupt and overthrow. And he is to guard it against evil and designing men who, like wolves, creep in to devour.

In all this work he should be diligent and watchful; and remember that "the Good Shepherd gives his life for the flock." Not that he may be required to die for them. The man who spends his life in the service has given his life for the flock. Jesus, the great Shepherd, both lived and died for his followers. He will always stand by his under shepherds when they are in line of duty.

### *As an Organizer:*

The branch president should be an organizer and an administrator, able to organize and direct the forces at his disposal. This will be an important item making for his success.

He must be more than an individual worker. He must be able to show others how to work, able to co-ordinate their efforts, and indeed all the activities of the local body of Saints.

### *Should Be Orderly in His Methods:*

The man in charge of any church service should plan ahead and think things out. He should not leave the service to chance, to hap and hazard. He should not go to the stand and then delay the service to select someone to lead the singing, someone to offer prayer, to select hymns, perhaps summon a speaker from the audience.

It is far better to have the situation "in hand," which means in mind; to have the arrangements made before the moment of emergency. The lecturer to a class in an "automotive school" advised his hearers, "Drive your

car a block ahead of you." He meant to look ahead at least a block; do not rush up to a street crossing at full speed and then attempt to jam on the brakes too late, or perhaps suddenly decide to turn to the right or the left. Next to prayer, nothing will pay the branch president more dividends than good, hard thinking about his job. Think it out at every step of the way; plan it out under divine inspiration and direction.

### *Should Maintain Order and Decorum:*

In many branches there is too much confusion between services. The branch president in connection with the other members of the priesthood should work for decorum. The social spirit leads to conversation and laughter. The social spirit should be encouraged to find expression in proper places and at proper times, at social and recreational gatherings and functions of a legitimate nature, and within reason at the close of the church service.

Too often, however, up to the very moment of opening the sacred service there is noise, amounting at times to hubbub. It does not tend to a reverent spirit for the meeting about to open. It offends visitors. It is not to be desired. Not by harsh or oppressive methods, but by education and persuasion the Saints should be taught to be quiet and orderly preceding and during the hour of worship.

In one of our churches this has been done so that now the Saints come in and quietly take their places without conversation. The pastor has the numbers of the hymns posted on a blackboard so that they need not be announced. The elder who is to offer prayer knows the place of the prayer in the order of service and is not announced. The speaker, unless a stranger, is not introduced formally. Printed announcements for the week are distributed at the door. At the close of the service the congregation retires to the lower auditorium, where

those who wish to visit may do so. This plan is presented as being merely suggestive, and not as a rigid form to be followed. Confusion before and during the service may be eliminated by giving the matter due thought and by co-operation. On the other hand, we should avoid a cold formalism.

### *Other Functions:*

The branch president may perform all other functions belonging to the Melchisedec priesthood as occasion may require, such as baptizing, administering to the sick, ordaining officers, laying on hands for the conferring of the Holy Ghost, administering the sacrament, and all those high and holy duties that belong to his office and calling.

### *Qualifications:*

It will be seen by all this that the presiding elder will require the gift of wisdom. He will need intelligence. He should cultivate tact. Diplomacy in the better sense is the gentle art of getting the right thing done with the least possible friction. He must be prayerful and of great faith. He should have the spirit of discernment. He should be punctual, always beginning and closing services on time. He should be a man of tender heart. He should be a leader. Everywhere today the church needs right leadership. Happy the branch where it is present. Unfortunate the branch where it is lacking.

This list of qualifications, with others that may occur to our readers, might tend to discourage some who feel their weakness. But remember that God has promised to give unto every man according to his need. "The Spirit helpeth our infirmities."

### *Use of Officers in the Aaronic Priesthood:*

Formerly it was the custom in each branch to elect a presiding priest, a presiding teacher, and a presiding dea-

con. The priests worked under the direction of and reported to the presiding priest, and so on down the line. This procedure rested on provisions in the *Book of Rules of Order and Debate* rather than on any law found in the Three Standard Books. And the provision in the *Book of Rules* for such a procedure was suspended by the General Conference of 1918.

Since the adoption of the legislation above referred to, most branches have abandoned the custom of electing presiding priest, teacher, and deacon, and all members of the Aaronic priesthood in a given branch who are in good standing and available for service are now considered part of the working force of the branch, ready for service under the direction of the branch president, to whom they report. The general church more than the branch confers priesthood, and these men serve by authority of their ordination.

#### *Provide for Meetings During Absence:*

We are frequently asked if it is proper for the branch president to arrange for someone to take charge of meetings when he is unable to attend, or during a temporary absence from the branch. It is quite right for him to do so, to safeguard the meetings during any temporary absence; rather than to trust to chance that someone of the priesthood may be present, and possible misunderstandings over precedent if several happen to be present.

In making his selection, all other things being equal, he should give precedence to superior office in the priesthood. But the welfare of the work is paramount, and he is not bound to appoint one who is not qualified or not in touch with the local situation, merely out of respect to priestly position.

#### *Fidelity to Trust:*

The branch president (pastor) will no doubt meet adverse criticisms and opposition. This can scarcely be

avoided. Christ himself could not avoid it. He should not become too easily or deeply discouraged thereby. He must learn to discount purely destructive and ill-natured criticism, which is only faultfinding in its worst form. Such should not cause him to stop or turn aside from his duty. It may be an evidence that he is a forward-moving, active man. Constructive criticisms he should always consider and profit by.

On the other hand, he will probably make many warm friends. His head should not be turned by their praises. He will be trusted to the limit by many of the members of his flock. He should never betray the confidence of man, woman, or child. When a spiritual advisor, a father in the church, betrays a trust, it is one of the most serious and inexcusable of betrayals. "I would be true, for there are those who trust me." Confessions will be made to him, and intimate confidences bestowed. He should know how to keep his counsel in such matters and not advertise such things abroad. They are made to him as an official representing the church and God. He has no right to make them a matter of gossip, even in his own home and to his own family.

Native ability plus preparation, divine guidance, devotion to duty, fidelity to trust, faith, hope, and charity—these will help the pastor to function as he should; to become that which ordination to the Melchisedec priesthood implies, a man "after the order of the Son of God."

### *A Leader Under Christ:*

All admit that Christ is the great head and leader of the church. Isaiah says that he is our "leader."<sup>7</sup> The admonition given to Joseph in his first vision was, "This is my beloved Son; hear ye him." Upon the organization of the church, April 6, 1830, the church took upon it his name. Joseph says of that memorable occasion: "I then laid my hands upon Oliver Cowdery and or-

dained him an elder of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints After which he ordained me also to the office of an elder of said church.”

Pursuant to her historic precedent, the church in the General Conference of 1926 declared for, “The supremacy of God, who so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son; and the divine right of that Son as builder of the church militant and the church triumphant to overrule and guide all the affairs of his church through the ministration of his Holy Spirit in testimony to all faithful Saints and through revelation to the one called and ordained to receive revelation for the church.”

Some have argued that Christ is our *only* leader; that there is place in the church for no other leader. Yet the law clearly provides for leadership under Christ. Christ himself said, in effect, “The works that I do shall ye do also.” Isaiah said that God gave Christ to be our “leader.” And Jesus said, “As thou [God] hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them [his disciples] into the world.”<sup>9</sup> If he was sent as a leader, so are his ministers sent to be leaders.

The book of *Doctrine and Covenants* tells us that men of the Melchisedec priesthood are men after the “order of the Son of God.”<sup>10</sup> He sends them to be leaders, even as God sent him to be a leader. Every ordained man, particularly of the Melchisedec priesthood, should be a leader under Christ. Indeed, if he sets any example at all, and he must set some example, if only that of quiescence, he is bound to influence some. If he influences at all by precept or by example, he is a leader. This leadership of the ministry is a very real and potent thing. It is to be seen in almost every branch. Some branches have almost entirely taken their color and opinions from someone who has led them. In that way a very few branches at times have been almost entirely turned from the church Leadership, both good and bad,

is a fact to reckon with. Many others by wise leadership have been saved to the church.

Presidents of quorums, of branches, of districts, and of stakes, in particular, are in position of leadership. How important then does it become that the ministry shall endeavor to be indeed "men after the order of the Son of God." It is very important that they shall be leaders under him, leading in his way and Spirit.

### THE PRIEST

"The priest's duty is to preach, teach, expound, exhort, and baptize, and administer the sacrament, and visit the house of each member, and exhort them to pray vocally and in secret, and attend to all family duties: and he may also ordain other priests, teachers, and deacons; and he is to take the lead of meetings when there is no elder present, but when there is an elder present he is only to preach, teach, expound, exhort, and baptize, and visit the house of each member, exhorting them to pray vocally and in secret, and attend to all family duties. In all these duties the priest is to assist the elder if occasion requires."<sup>11</sup>

*May Preach, Teach, Exhort, Etc.:*

The priest is to preach, teach, expound, and exhort, according to the law found in the *Book of Doctrine and Covenants*:

And the *Book of Mormon* says that the disciples of the church on this continent, when ordaining priests, said: "In the name of Jesus Christ I ordain you a priest . . . to preach repentance and remission of sins through Jesus Christ, by the endurance of faith on his name to the end."<sup>12</sup>

Very important instruction as to the character of their preaching is found in the following:

"And again, the elders, priests, and teachers of the

church shall teach the principles of my gospel which are in the Bible and the *Book of Mormon*, in the which is the fullness of the gospel; and they shall observe the covenants and church articles to do them."<sup>13</sup>

With others, the priests share the duty to conserve the gospel of Jesus Christ, teaching those things that are written in the Standard Books of the church.

#### *May Baptize, Administer Sacrament, and Solemnize Marriages:*

The priest may baptize.<sup>14</sup> He may administer the sacrament, as stated in the same section. Also the *Book of Mormon* has the following: "The manner of their elders and priests administering the flesh and blood of Christ unto the church."<sup>15</sup>

The church law concerning marriage says that "the solemnization should be performed by a presiding high priest, high priest, bishop, elder, or priest," etc.<sup>16</sup>

While teachers and deacons may not lay on hands in confirmation, the privilege is extended to the priest to ordain other priests, teachers, or deacons: "He may also ordain other priests, teachers, and deacons."<sup>17</sup>

#### *May Preside:*

A priest may preside over a branch in his own right when so elected by the people.<sup>18</sup>

#### *A Visiting Officer:*

The priest is to visit the house of each member.<sup>19</sup> He goes not as an inquisitor, but rather "exhorting them to pray vocally and in secret," and attend to all family duties.

This is one of the most important duties falling to the lot of the priest—to move among the members from house to house, meeting them in the privacy of their home life, strengthening them with wise counsel, ex-

horting them to attend to all their duties, and in all this representing the interest of the church in their welfare. For the priests go into these homes, representing God and the church.

This is their duty, and the members should honor them in it and co-operate with them, not resenting their visits as an intrusion, but welcoming them as a wise and legitimate part of the gospel economy. God knows the weakness of human nature, and he has so ordered the organization of the church that there are these officers whose duty it is to visit the members, exercising a kindly watch care, and extending a helping hand.

The priests in these visits should use good judgment and be guided by the Spirit; so there are no rigid rules that can be laid down to govern them. The Lord himself has not attempted to do that. They must be actuated by the spirit of love, and go about their work because they desire to do good. They should avoid that spirit of formality that moves men to do things merely to fulfill the *text* of the law. They should endeavor to get close to the Saints and in sympathy with them, and in this way will accomplish great good and obtain a goodly reward for themselves.

It will be observed that while the teacher is to "see that all the members do their duty,"<sup>20</sup> the priest is to exhort them to attend to their duties, especially those duties that are termed "family duties." It is the work of the priests to exhort and persuade and advise and admonish. The teacher also persuades and exhorts, and failing to secure desired results he may set in motion those processes that will result in the disciplining of those who do not obey the divine law and put away all iniquity, hardness, backbiting, and evil of every nature.

#### *May Travel:*

The law provides that when practicable and desirable the priest may travel and preach:

"And, behold, the high priests should travel, and also the elders, and also the lesser priests."<sup>21</sup>

"Therefore, take with you those who are ordained unto the lesser priesthood, and send them before you to make appointments, and prepare the way, and to fill appointments that you yourselves are not able to fill. Behold, this is the way that mine apostles, in ancient days, built up the church unto me."<sup>22</sup>

Those who do not travel, but officiate in branches, in their calling as priests, will find a splendid field to occupy in the discharge of duties outlined in the law—especially in their work as visiting officers—they will never travel far enough to find a finer field of work.

Most of the priests are laboring or professional men, and many of them find it difficult to take the time to make visits. But it is said that difficulties are made to be overcome. The quarterly report from one branch showed one hundred sixteen visits for the quarter, made by three priests. These were working men and men of family, and had little or no time for visiting except evenings and Sunday afternoons. Their record for one quarter shows what may be done.

#### *His Primary Work:*

While the priest, like other members of the Aaronic priesthood, may preach when necessary, that may not be his primary function. His greatest work is as a visiting officer. If he does that work well, he has rendered a distinct and great contribution. In that work naturally he works with and under the general direction of the branch president.

As in every sort of ministry for the church, the priest should think of his mission as being fundamentally important and sacred. He should say to himself, "I am going into this home to visit this family as a personal representative of the Lord Jesus Christ."

In making his visits the priest should be clean and

presentable in his personal appearance. He should be friendly and cheerful in his manner. He should endeavor to carry with him the "good Spirit." He should leave faith and strength behind him. He may well study methods of approaching people. A good salesman for vacuum cleaners or aluminum ware, or what not, gives the most painstaking care and attention to details of approach to people and presentation of his message. Representatives of the gospel should be no less solicitous to succeed in their work.

### *Constructive Work:*

Attention to methods is not enough. The priest should go in true humility and faith, with a really constructive message. Jesus went about doing good. When people even touched the hem of his garment they received new strength and courage. And he said that the works he did his disciples should do also.

The priest should not go with a negative or fault-finding spirit. He should not leave the people with doubt and perplexity and pessimism as a result of his visit. Rather should they have new vision, more faith, be more disposed to pay their tithing, offer their prayers, go to church, and in every way help to build up the kingdom. The priests will be known by their fruits in this regard, and are, with the missionary, equally under the divine injunction, "Avoid sowing seeds of distrust and suspicion either in public ministration or in private conversation. The church has been admonished heretofore in this respect and the Spirit saith again, it is unbecoming to the character and calling of those who administer in the name of Jesus Christ the Lord."<sup>28</sup>

Going in that spirit and with an affirmative message, the priest may be a real benediction to the families he visits. And after his visit, passing from the portals of the home, he may truly say, as did his Master, "Peace be unto this house. My peace I leave with this home."

### *Possibility of a Concerted Message:*

The priests of a given branch may at times by agreement among themselves and with the pastor go out with a uniform and concerted message. The message, in addition to the usual and fundamental exhortations concerning duty, might by the agreement convey simultaneously to all the Saints of the branch a bit of counsel, such as advice to attend a particularly important service, or to attend the annual district reunion, or to subscribe for the church papers, or to buy and study the *Book of Mormon* and *Doctrine and Covenants* in addition to the *Bible*, or to engage in prayer for a particular boon to common interest. The special and worthy messages which the priests of a given branch might carry simultaneously are numerous.

It is in home visiting that priests can especially be effective in touching the lives of the people, leading them to an appreciation and the development of those Christian characteristics called the "graces." Peter tells us by diligently adding to our faith, virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness and charity, that we shall never fall. It is the priest's privilege to carry these messages to the homes.

### *Special Service Where There Is Urgent Need:*

The priest may well have a certain amount of routine method in his visiting. He should not visit haphazardly, but may well mark out an itinerary on which he can with least loss of time and motion visit the greatest number of families the greatest number of times during the year.

But this routine should not be purely formal. He should be alert to render aid when and where it is most needed. A given family that has had sickness or trying hospital operation, or a death in the family, a tragedy, a great temptation, or a trial of faith, may need

visiting often, even to the exclusion of some other family that has no trouble. As in all other things, the law of "the need" works here.

### *The Point of Contact:*

We cannot repeat too often that the priest goes into the homes of the Saints to represent the church. He is the point of contact which the church has with the Saints in the intimate circle of the home. No more sacred or dignified calling could be conceived. Great wisdom and inspiration are needed in that work. There should be developed throughout the church a great band of devoted men giving their time to such work.

### THE TEACHER

"The teacher's duty is to watch over the church always, and be with, and strengthen them, and see that there is no iniquity in the church, neither hardness with each other; neither lying, backbiting, nor evil speaking; and see that the church meet together often, and also see that all the members do their duty, and he is to take the lead of meetings in the absence of the elder or priest, and is to be assisted always, in all his duties in the church, by the deacons, if occasion requires; but neither teachers nor deacons have authority to baptize, administer the sacrament, or lay on hands; they are, however, to warn, expound, exhort, and teach, and invite all to come unto Christ."<sup>24</sup>

"And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ."

### *Peacemakers:*

Within the church there are officers who should take notice of difficulties when they occur between church members. For hate is a foreign element in the church

and must be eliminated. Not so in the world, for the world is not founded on a basis of love. But the church must eliminate hate and cultivate love. Paul charges us to take heed that we do not backbite one another, lest we be devoured of one another.

Within the branches the teachers are the ones specifically designated to act as mediators and peacemakers, by virtue of the charge that they are to see that there is no "hardness with each other," nor "backbiting, nor evil speaking."

Jesus said, "Blessed are the peacemakers," so this is indeed a blessed position to occupy, and calls for consecrated men of a high order of spirituality, and possessed of great tact and good judgment. It is true that all members and ministers should be peacemakers, and by calling and disposition conservators of the peace, but when the church as an organized society takes official notice of those quarrels and misunderstandings that sometimes occur between members, the teacher is the one through whom the church acts (when a teacher is available who is not in any way involved or disqualified).

In another sense the teacher is a peacemaker between the church and those members who are in transgression, for the man who is a transgressor of the church law is in a sense at war with the church and with God, and in all such cases occurring in the branch there is work for the teacher to do in his official capacity.

As a last resort, he may prefer charges against those who are in transgression, after having performed faithful labor with them in an effort to secure reformation.

In those cases where difficulty occurs between members, the rule adopted by the church is in harmony with Matthew 18: 15-17, but is more specific, and when practicable involves the presence of the teacher as a mediator and witness. It is provided that the one offended shall first meet the one offending, privately, and seek

reconciliation. In the event of a failure to secure reconciliation, at the second attempt "he shall take with him some teacher of the church, or if such teacher be not obtainable, or be an interested party, a deacon if obtainable, otherwise a member, and shall try a second time to secure an adjustment of the difficulty existing, but shall not state the matter of grievance to such officer or member except in the presence of the party offending" (*Rules of Order and Debate*).

#### *A Watchman on the Tower:*

The law says that the teacher's duty is "to watch over the church *always*" and to "see that there is no iniquity in the church." This accords with the further statement, "The deacons and teachers should be appointed to watch over the church, to be standing ministers unto the church"<sup>25</sup>

The statement that the teacher is to "watch over the church always, and be with, and strengthen them," indicates that it is the duty of the teacher to be present with the church at its services, whenever it is possible for him to do so, and to scrutinize the congregation and exercise a watch care over it, noting individuals as well as the general assembly, that he may judge of their spirituality and know when to exercise himself in his calling in specific cases. He should be there, on duty, as an example to others, and ready to help and strengthen in every legitimate way, by precept, by example, by exhortation, by prayer, by word of encouragement and brotherly cheer.

He cannot know when hardness, evil speaking, backbiting, lying, iniquity, indifference to duty, exist in the church unless he is alert and at his post. He must be free from these things himself and not given to gossip about the "cases" he may handle.

In addition to his watch care over the morals of the members, he is charged to see that they do not neglect

to attend services. This he may do by exhortation in public or in private, and by moral suasion, as it goes without saying that force cannot be employed to make people attend church. They must be persuaded, and persuasion does not mean scolding. People must be attracted, or impelled from a sense of duty understood as a result of correct teaching.

### *A Visiting Officer:*

While the teacher is not specifically named as a visiting officer, the nature of his duties seems to make him of necessity to an extent a visiting officer. He cannot ascertain the condition of those members who absent themselves from the church and may need his special care, unless he visits them. He cannot get a general understanding of the spiritual condition of the people unless he moves among them.

For be it understood that the teacher is not merely an "undertaker," who is to act only when the priests have reported a spiritual corpse in the branch; nor is he a meat ax surgeon, whose only work is to cut off and expel. He should be a conservative force in the branch. His first duty is to reconcile, to save. He may be obliged to take the initial steps that will lead up to expulsion, in some cases, but this is done as a last resort, after efforts to save have failed. His labor is performed, not to "make a case" that will stand in the courts, so that the erring one may be expelled, but with the whole-hearted desire to save the individual. If he fails in this, of course his labor stands as a witness against the offender, when the matter comes to the courts; but that was not the primary purpose of the labor.

No one can be a successful teacher who does not love humanity. This work requires the Spirit of the Master, who came not to destroy men, but to save them.

In this work, as we have said, the teacher will find

it necessary to visit the members in their homes. He may visit with the priest under certain circumstances, as when a branch has but one priest and one teacher, and it is unwise for one to visit a family alone, but under such circumstances he goes as a teacher, and acts in his own capacity as a teacher, and not as an assistant to the priest. Or, where a deacon is available, he may take the deacon with him, as it is said that the deacon may assist the teacher in all of his duties when necessary.

On this point of visiting we wish to quote a paragraph from an address by Elder Joseph R. Lambert, as it is to the point:

"I gather that the teacher is a visiting officer from a consideration of the character of his work as a teacher. It seems to me that this work cannot be properly and fully performed without more or less visiting among the members of the branch. And while I do not regard him as a visiting officer in the same sense as I do the priest, yet I think it is impractical for him to accomplish the work that is imposed upon him in the law, without visiting among the members of the church. . . . I remember a little branch to which I belonged when I was a teacher; sometimes I would notice that certain persons failed to partake of the sacrament. And I thought it my duty to find out why they did not partake. I took their names at once, when they did not partake, and on the first good opportunity (I did not wait long, either) I approached them and told them in as good a way as I knew how, and as kindly as I could, that I noticed that they did not partake of the sacrament on Sunday; then they would tell me why. . . . So I believe that the teacher should be on the alert; and that he is required to do a great deal of visiting in order to honor the law which defines his duties as an officer in the church."<sup>28</sup>

### *May Preach:*

The teacher may preach, in a local way, as the following will show:

"Resolved, That in our judgment teachers and deacons are authorized by the law to labor as preachers within the branches to which they belong, when they are presidents thereof, or with the advice and consent of the presiding officer."<sup>27</sup>

"After they had prayed unto the Father in the name of Christ, they laid their hands upon them, and said, In the name of Jesus Christ I ordain you to be a priest; (or if he be a teacher), I ordain you a teacher, to preach repentance and remission of sins through Jesus Christ, by the endurance of faith on his name to the end. Amen."

"High priests should travel, and also the elders, and also the lesser priests; but the deacons and teachers should be appointed to watch over the church, to be standing ministers unto the church."

### *Warn, Expound, Exhort, and Teach:*

This function of exhorting, warning, expounding, and invitation may be exercised either in private or in public, as wisdom, the circumstances, and the ability of the teacher may direct. Our observation has led us to believe that the field of public instruction from the pulpit is pretty well occupied by the general ministry, while the field of private instruction, teaching, heart to heart exhortation, fireside preaching, is not so well occupied.

Not every good public speaker is a good conversationalist. The teacher who is a good conversationalist, spiritually minded, and well informed, will find a broad and fertile field for him to occupy as a teacher of the law in the homes of the people.<sup>28</sup>

### *May Preside:*

A teacher may be elected to preside over a branch, in

which case, of course, he presides in his own right as head of the branch.<sup>29</sup>

A further reading of this citation discovers the wisdom of electing high priests or elders where such are available and are considered fully qualified to act, and are so situated that they can act; but that which we have cited shows that a teacher may under certain conditions be chosen to preside over a branch.

In his work naturally the teacher works with and under the general direction of the branch president, and there should be the closest of co-operation.

### THE DEACON

In Philippians Paul mentions the deacons who were in the church at Philippi.<sup>30</sup> This, with other references, shows that they held an official position in the New Testament church. In 1 Timothy some of the qualifications of a deacon are stated.<sup>31</sup>

From this reference it would appear that while the deacons need not be long-faced, gloomy hypochondriacs, they should be sober-minded and of firmly established character—not giddy, or light-minded, or clownish. They should not be greedy, for they may carry the bag of the local church, and so should not be beset by greed, which might lead to theft, or by stinginess, which might interfere with a generous distribution of aid to the needy.

They are not to be double-tongued, for the deacon (as a standing officer in the church, exercising a certain watchcare, and keeping order in the congregation, as well as visiting those in need, and assisting the teacher in handling cases of difficulty between members, or between members and the branch) will see things in the course of his ministry that will furnish rare material for gossip. He is to be discreet and keep his mouth closed about such things, excepting when the right time comes for him to speak.

Men are to be proved before they are elevated to the office of deacon. But having been found blameless, they may occupy therein when called. This is a provision that as a rule holds good regarding other offices as well. The church has a right to scrutinize the records of men to ascertain fitness and worthiness before they are set apart to special offices.

It has been argued by some that single men cannot be deacons, because Paul says: "Let the deacons be the husbands of one wife." But such interpretation is not justified by Paul's language. It is evident that he meant that a deacon should be husband of not more than one wife. The menace of polygamy was recognized even in that day. We are sustained in this thought by the fact that God has frequently called men to be deacons who were not married, and they have approved themselves in the office. Given a little time, most of them can qualify so far as the other specifications are concerned.

Those who use the office of deacon well "purchase a good degree and great boldness in the faith." Some have thought of this office slightly. But when we stop to think seriously, it must be evident to us that any office in which men are permitted to help God is a high and honorable calling, and it is a privilege to work therein.

In the *Doctrine and Covenants* we are told that deacons are standing ministers: "But the deacons and teachers should be appointed to watch over the church, to be standing ministers unto the church"<sup>32</sup>

Their duties are more specifically stated thus: "The teacher's duty is to watch over the church always, and be with, and strengthen them, and see that there is no iniquity in the church, neither hardness with each other; neither lying, backbiting, nor evil speaking; and see that the church meet together often, and also see that all the members do their duty, and he is to take the lead

of meetings in the absence of the elder or priest, and is to be assisted always in all his duties in the church, *by the deacons*, if occasion requires.”<sup>33</sup>

### *Assisting the Teacher:*

We are inclined to give a liberal interpretation to this term, “assisting the teacher.” We are inclined to think that when necessary the teacher may send the deacon to perform labor by himself, or with another deacon, and without the immediate presence of the teacher—that the deacon is not bound to be merely a silent witness accompanying the teacher in the settlement of a case. Conditions might arise owing to which the teacher would be confined to his home, or in some way prevented from attending to necessary labor. But he could send the deacon, if qualified, to attend to the work. That would be assisting the teacher. The deacon becomes the agent in the matter; and that which a man does by a properly appointed agent he does himself, in a legal sense. (Both would labor with and under the direction of the branch president.)

### *He May Preside:*

But the deacon has certain duties of his own, which are performed in his own right, and not as an assistant to the teacher. For instance, under certain conditions he may act as branch president, for it is written: “A branch may be presided over by a high priest, an elder, priest, teacher, *or deacon*, chosen and sustained by the vote of the branch.”<sup>34</sup>

Again, in the absence of other officers, he may be called to take the lead of meetings. Under these conditions, and when chosen as president of a quorum of deacons, the deacon becomes a presiding officer in his own right.

### *He May Preach:*

The deacon may preach in a local way. The church in General Conference has so decided.

"Resolved, That in our judgment teachers and deacons are authorized by the law to labor as preachers within the branches to which they belong, when they are presidents thereof, or with the advice and consent of the chief presiding officer."<sup>35</sup>

This is in harmony with a further provision of Section 17, not previously noted in this treatise, which says that teachers and deacons are "to warn, expound, exhort, and teach, and invite all to come to Christ."

### *President Joseph Smith on the Duties of the Deacon:*

In addition to the duties outlined in the *Doctrine and Covenants* the church has specified other duties that are additional or subsidiary to those already named. In 1871 President Joseph Smith, who by virtue of his position had the right to interpret and define such matters, prepared an article on the duties of the deacon. It was published in the *Saints' Herald*; and in the General Conference of 1900, the church, on the recommendation of the First Presidency, Twelve, and Presiding Bishopric, adopted an abbreviated form of this article setting forth the duties of the deacon in specific terms. So this interpretation has become law, so far as Conference resolutions can make law, governing the duties and rights of the deacon.

"We have elsewhere written that every branch must have a place of meeting. This place of meeting, if a public building, hall, meetinghouse, or church, must be in the actual possession of the association of the church members worshipping there, at least during its occupancy while worshipping; and if the property is owned by the church, someone must have constructive possession at all times. What particular officer of the church has

precedence of right in this constructive possession? The right to carry the keys; open the doors; conduct visitors, either those belonging or not belonging to the church; to see that the floors, door, windows, pulpit or stand, seats, table or stand, lamps, and other fixtures are clean and in good order; to open the doors at the hour of gathering for preaching, fellowship, prayer, or business meetings; to see that the lamps or candles are trimmed, lighted and burning, in due time for evening meetings; to see that the members coming in find seats; to keep watch over the Saints during meetings, repressing loud talking, whispering, and laughing, repressing the thoughtless, and rebuking the giddy; putting a prompt stop to rude, indecent, and boisterous acts, by which propriety, solemnity, and peace of the meetings may be disturbed; to exercise kind and diligent supervision over the health and comfort of the Saints while in meeting, by securing a proper ventilation of the room; to light and keep burning the fires by which the room is kept warm; to have charge of the treasury; to receive, disburse, and account for the contributions of the Saints, intended for necessary and incidental expenses of the association of members; to keep, preserve from damage, and account for all personal effects of the association; to visit the poor, ascertain their needs and report the same to the church; and in fact, to perform any and all of those necessary duties by which the welfare of the Saints is secured through a careful administration of the outward ordinances, a faithful employment of the talents intrusted to that man. It follows then of a necessity that the right, the duty of the performing these acts—these unwritten but essential things of the law, devolve upon the office of deacon.”<sup>38</sup>

*To Carry the Keys and Open the Doors:*

From this statement of duties and rights we note the following:

The deacon has constructive possession of the church building, and it is his "right to carry the keys; open the doors; conduct visitors, either those belonging or not belonging to the church."

This does not mean necessarily that the pastor or other branch officials shall not have a key to the church.

We have visited branches where, when the hour of service arrived, the congregation was found seated or standing on the sidewalk or lawn, unable to get into the church building. This should never happen. A secular business conducted in such a way would soon go down. Only by a miracle of divine grace could a spiritual concern survive long, using such methods. The doors should be opened in ample time for all church services, including Sunday school and Religio meetings, so that those worthy members who set a good example by coming early may get in.

### *To Keep Things Clean and in Order:*

It is his duty to see that all fixtures about the church building, such as tables, seats, and stand, are clean and in good condition.

The house of the Lord should be clean, as well as the persons of those who assemble there. To observe the Lord's Supper and other holy rites and ordinances in a dirty or untidy room, is not in harmony with the divine will. Church buildings should be made clean and attractive, both within and without. The ornamentations and furnishings may be plain and humble, but should be clean and harmonious. Good taste costs little and pays well.

We know at least one deacon whose delight it is to beautify the church, both within and without. He has given great thought and labor to the flowers, trees, and lawn surrounding the building. The very approach to the house of the Lord he has made pleasant. Diligently

all summer he cultivates flowers in his own garden so that the pulpit may be adorned each Sunday. In this work he has joy and blessing.

Yet we must have a care and not arrive at too great a degree of fastidiousness, like those housewives who make everyone miserable if a stray fly or a speck of dust enter the door. Church property is for use—legitimate use and wear and tear of all kinds entailed by service.

### *To Oversee Heating and Ventilation—A Point of Friction:*

He is to exercise "kind and diligent supervision over the comfort of the Saints while in meeting," by attending to the ventilation, and to fires during cold weather. Here is a point of friction. It is difficult to please all in the matter of ventilation and heating. One man's fresh air seems to be another man's pneumonia. And the members sometimes offend in this matter by themselves opening and closing windows or stirring the fire or closing the damper while the deacon is present. They even do this at times when services are in progress, thus annoying the speaker; and their bungling and inexperienced efforts make the disturbance twofold. It would be better if such persons would communicate with the deacon in some way, making known their wishes.

Here is room for the exercise of judgment. Deacons may well study methods of ventilation. Some of them seem to think that so long as air is cold it need not be fresh. They reason, Why build a fire and then open the window? Churches are notorious offenders in these matters. The assembly breathes the air over and over again. The meeting closes—the windows also close. The poisoned air is canned up for use at the next service. The preacher must work and sweat to keep people awake when there is not oxygen enough in the room to feed the flame of life and intelligence.

### *To Act as Treasurer if Properly Qualified:*

He is to "have charge of the treasury," to receive, disburse, and give account of church funds. This indicates that if properly qualified he should be the treasurer of the branch. In most branches where there are two or more resident deacons, it is probable that one may be selected who is competent to keep the records of such matters and handle them properly, though it is a fact that not every man can keep accounts, and not every man can solicit money successfully. A condition might arise where a deacon would not be suited to perform such work, though competent to attend to other duties, and the branch might prefer that some other person be elected as treasurer, or he be given an assistant who could attend to that part of his work. But by this ruling of the church, the right to care for the branch treasury primarily belongs to the office of deacon, and all other things being equal he should be thus recognized by the branch. In all probability deacons will become more and more of assistance to the bishops in financial matters.

### *Financial Agents:*

The spiritual work of the church is to a degree dependent upon material means for expression. The spirit of man expresses itself through the body of man. In the general church there is a certain dependence upon material things in the prosecution of missionary work, and the publishing departments, and all phases of the work. It devolves upon the bishops, bishop's agent, and solicitors, to gather and administer the finances thus greatly needed in general church work.

In the local church there is a similar need. The deacons must become more and more a body of trained men prepared, when called upon, to assist the bishops in this line of service. The Saints must be taught to

give adequately to meet the just needs of the church. Such teaching is by no means so thorough and systematic as it should be. If the money is not at hand to pay legitimate church bills, the spiritual authorities cannot do their work, no matter how devout they may be. The credit of the church and her success is thus at stake.

### *To Keep Order—A Trying Charge:*

The deacon is to "keep watch over the Saints during meeting, repressing loud talking, whispering, and laughing, reproving the thoughtless, and rebuking the giddy; putting a prompt stop to rude, indecent, and boisterous acts, by which the propriety, solemnity, and peace of the meeting may be disturbed."

This may become in some instances a disagreeable duty—but it remains a duty. There is no position in the church that does not carry with it some features that might be termed disagreeable. If one is seeking repose and wishes to continue irresponsible, he should not enter any grade of the priesthood. Enemies are sometimes made by the deacon while discharging the duty of maintaining order. But he must do this duty firmly, yet with all the tact and kindness at his command. Most acts of the kind mentioned are thoughtless and should be dealt with in a kindly way and, when possible, by private admonition.

Where there is evidence of a vicious and willful intention to disturb the meeting by drunken or malicious persons, the deacon may use drastic methods to bring such disturbance "to an immediate stop." If necessary he may summon civil officers and secure an arrest. The law safeguards the right of every religious body to hold its meetings undisturbed by malicious intruders.

Thoughtless persons who have disturbed the meeting should not become offended when the deacon admon-

ishes them to desist. He is but doing his duty as imposed upon him by the church. He is acting within his authority. He cannot consistently do otherwise. Surely no fair-minded Latter Day Saint will hold resentment against him for so doing. It is to his credit rather than otherwise.

We have submitted to two of our brethren who are attorneys at law, the question of the right of a deacon to use force in quelling a disturbance of a religious service, and his right to expel such an offender from the church building. On this point I. A. Smith submits the following opinion:

"A person who disturbs a religious meeting is a trespasser, and it is the right and duty of any person present to assist in putting a stop to the disturbance, just as it is the duty of any person who sees another attempting any misdemeanor or felony to prevent such act. *Afortiori* (all the more) a deacon or any agent of the body holding the meeting would have the right to quell any riot or disturbance, even to the point of expelling a person from the place of meeting.

"The foregoing is the common law; statutory law does little more than affirm the common law by making such a disturbance of any meeting, religious, political, or otherwise, a misdemeanor and providing a penalty for the same."

On this point S. A. Burgess writes:

"Having charge of the property, he may remove trespassers or any other persons not having a right superior or equal to his. This does not give him the right to shut out members of the congregation. In the case of necessity, we will go further and say that he may call on others to assist him in arresting for a breach of peace committed in his presence.

"On the other hand, the pastor of the church or the deacon is not excusable himself in disturbing a meeting;

which he may be disturbing even though he has it in charge, and you can readily see that wisdom should be used in attempting to remove persons from the building. Some full-blooded, hot-headed, stubborn man in the office might very easily get himself into the wrong end of the case in attempting to exercise his authority with too free a hand; but where need arises he may act without fear."

In all these duties the deacon should operate under the direction of the branch president, and in full accord with him.

### *Ushering the People:*

Ordinarily the deacons act as ushers. In so doing they are occupying a place requiring dignity and tact. Courtesy in helping people to find satisfactory seats, particularly if they be strangers, will be appreciated. A friendly invitation to visitors to return helps greatly to leave a good impression and a desire to come again. Some deacons also are diligent and tactful in supplying church literature to visitors.

The deacons may well give a great deal of thought and study to the problem of handling and seating audiences graciously, with unflinching patience, and with dignity as proper representatives of the church.<sup>37</sup>

### *The Usher As Host:*

Remember you are receiving guests for the church of Christ. Think of it as a consecrated service. You may be the first point of contact that the stranger has with the church.

Some points noted by an authority on ushering as worthy of emphasis are as follows:

"Present a neat personal appearance. Be dignified but not stiff. Be friendly. Know how to smile. Call

visitors by name, if you know them, and urge them to return. Be friendly but not too familiar. Do not patronize. Treat rich and poor alike. Do not resent a rebuff, but learn to say, 'I serve the Lord Christ.' Study the room and know where the available seats are when you need them. Induce people to take seats well forward if possible so that you need not take late arrivals to the front in the middle of the sermon.

During the prayer and special musical numbers always detain newcomers in the vestibule. Look to the comfort of guests. Little attentions such as supplying them with hymnals will be appreciated. After the service give the invitation to return. You are one of the most valuable assistants that the pastor has. Keep your eyes open. Think about your job."

#### BRANCH OFFICERS SHOULD BE SUSTAINED

If we honor our officers, God will honor them. That does not mean that if we do not honor them he will dishonor them; but it does mean that if we do not honor them he cannot work through them to bless us, because we will not receive their ministrations. This will apply to the presiding elder and to all others of the priesthood, including general church officers.

We should not feel resentful if the deacon calls us to order when we are whispering or disturbing the meeting. He cannot do otherwise and do his duty. We should not resent the ministrations of the teacher as an intrusion upon our private affairs, or repel the visits of the priest. They are doing their work as required by the law. They cannot do otherwise and do their duty. And likewise with the presiding elder. Members should honor all these men in their offices and co-operate with them and help to make their work pleasant and fruitful, that all together the flock may receive the blessings that wait on an orderly, united and devoted ministry.

\* Arranged from "Duties of Districts and Branch Officers," as published in the *Priesthood Journal*, July, 1939, with the consent of the author, Presiding Evangelist Elbert A. Smith

- 1 1 Peter 5 1-4.
- 2 Acts 20. 28.
- 3 *Doctrine and Covenants* 120 3.
- 4 *Doctrine and Covenants* 83 7, 9
- 5 *Doctrine and Covenants* 17 9, 46: 1.
- 6 *Doctrine and Covenants* 42 5.
- 7 Isaiah 55 4
- 8 *Times and Seasons*, volume 3, pp. 944, 945.
- 9 John 17 18
- 10 *Doctrine and Covenants* 104 1.
- 11 *Doctrine and Covenants* 17 10
- 12 Moroni 3: 2.
- 13 *Doctrine and Covenants* 42 5
- 14 *Doctrine and Covenants* 17 10.
- 15 Moroni 4 1.
- 16 *Doctrine and Covenants* 111. 1.
- 17 *Doctrine and Covenants* 17 10.
- 18 *Doctrine and Covenants* 120 2.
- 19 *Doctrine and Covenants* 17 10.
- 20 *Doctrine and Covenants* 17 11.
- 21 *Doctrine and Covenants* 83 22.
- 22 *Doctrine and Covenants* 83 20.
- 23 *Doctrine and Covenants* 131: 4.
- 24 *Doctrine and Covenants* 17: 11, Ephesians 4: 11, 12.
- 25 *Doctrine and Covenants* 83. 22.
- 26 Elder Joseph R Lambert in the *Saints' Herald*, volume 51, p. 318 (April 6, 1904)
- 27 General Conference Resolution, No 449, Moroni 3 2, *Doctrine and Covenants* 83 22.
- 28 *Doctrine and Covenants* 17. 11, 42: 5.
- 29 *Doctrine and Covenants* 120: 2.
- 30 Philippians 1: 1.
- 31 1 Timothy 3: 8-13.
- 32 *Doctrine and Covenants* 83: 22.
- 33 *Doctrine and Covenants* 17: 11
- 34 *Doctrine and Covenants* 120: 2.
- 35 General Conference Resolution, No 449, *Doctrine and Covenants* 17: 11.
- 36 General Conference Resolution, No. 471.
- 37 Read *Church Ushers' Manual*, by Garrett, published by Fleming H. Revell Company, New York.

# THE EVANGELIST IN THE BRANCH AND DISTRICT

## NOT AN ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

THE evangelist (patriarch) is not an administrative officer in the branch; and yet the law specifically provides that evangelists shall be ordained and set in all large branches and districts.<sup>1</sup> This provision of the law has not been carried out in many places, for reasons not necessary to canvass here. It is to be hoped that in the future it may be honored to a greater degree.

## WORK IN CLOSE CO-OPERATION

At all points where his work touches administrative affairs in branch or district, the evangelist should work in close co-operation with the respective administrative officers. Since his work is spiritual he may be able to render some services better than they can be rendered by men who are burdened with the oftentimes harassing problems of executive affairs.

## "COMFORT THE SAINTS"

The evangelist is to "comfort the Saints,"<sup>2</sup> It may well be that the branch officers could invite the evangelist to visit selected homes where there is sorrow or where there is a cloud of discouragement, either by himself or in company with the pastor or other church officers. One local evangelist reports visiting many hundreds of homes where there seemed need for comfort and words of cheer and revival.

## "GIVE COUNSEL AND ADVICE"

The evangelist is to "give counsel and advice."<sup>3</sup> While he should be exceedingly careful to avoid giving advice

that might be at cross purposes with that given by the executive officers, there may be times when the pastor could to advantage send people to him for counsel. He would not be under the handicap of being considered a disciplinary officer. There are evangelists in various branches, districts, and missions, whose long years of experience in important business affairs and church work fit them to give counsel based on experience, wisdom, and spiritual intuition.

### CONDUCT "REVIVAL MEETINGS"

The evangelist is to conduct "revival meetings."<sup>4</sup> The number of our men in position to conduct protracted meetings of that nature is limited. And yet those available have done fine work. Branches have been revived, the Saints stimulated to obey both the spiritual and the financial laws of the church (which after all are one), and converts have been made to the faith. The time is anticipated when we may have a number of younger evangelists gifted in this sort of work who can make a study of the best methods of revival work to meet modern conditions; however, the spirit of "revival" is not limited in its functions to protracted meetings, and the evangelist may be used to bring that spirit to individuals and to homes if there is close co-operation between him and the branch officers, or if with the co-operation of the district officers he shall visit in various branches in his district.

### "CONFER SPIRITUAL BLESSINGS"

The evangelist is to "confer spiritual blessings." Here is a point at which there has been much misunderstanding, and this work has been in some disrepute because some have thought of it in low terms as a form of fortune telling. That view betrays a total lack of under-

standing. The blessing of little children brings much comfort and a spirit of reconsecration to parents of the children; but it means nothing to the children involved (so far as they perceive at the time): they may cry lustily through the entire ceremony, to the embarrassment of the minister and the covert amusement of the audience. In more mature years, being of an age to enter intelligently and feelingly into the service, people come of their own volition to receive a patriarchal blessing; and it may be made a time of commitment, of rededication, a turning point in life, as well as an occasion for the giving of counsel not to be forgotten, and invoking a divine blessing of utmost significance.

#### PASTOR AND EVANGELIST TO CO-OPERATE

Ordinarily people come for such a blessing on their own initiative; but there may be times of great importance, even crises, in the lives of men and women when the pastor could do no greater service than to advise them to seek this blessing. To the young man about to be ordained, it may be made the occasion of a rededication, a reconsecration, in preparation for his life's ministry. To the girl leaving home to go away and enter upon some profession or other type of work it may be the means of fortifying her and preparing her to meet this new and trying experience out in the world with its hazards. To the young man and the young woman about to be married, or being married about to engage in the work of home building, it may be an act of sacred preparation only less significant than the marriage ceremony. The pastor and evangelist may well co-operate to serve people at such times as those just mentioned.

#### NOT "MEDDLE WITH BRANCH AFFAIRS"

The question of jurisdiction has not been raised in

this article. The evangelist is not an administrative officer, is not to "meddle with branch affairs," and as a general officer is not under the direction of local administrative officers. The basis of work is co-operative, with local administrative officers, and only with the closest co-operation can he fit helpfully into the branch and district organizations.

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1. *Doctrine and Covenants* 104. 17, 122 8.

2. *Doctrine and Covenants* 125 3

3. *Doctrine and Covenants* 125 3.

4 *Doctrine and Covenants* 125 4.

## THE BRANCH PROGRAM

WHAT is the program of the branch? The program of the branch is to carry out the program of the general church. But what is the church trying to do? Speaking generally, it is to "Evangelize the world" and "Zionize the church." But if we continue to think and talk in generalities, we are a long way short of our goal.

For a moment let us look at the program of the church. We are an evangelistic church. Our basic movement is that of evangelization. In order to live, we must grow through our evangelization process. This is true not just because we need more members, but it is true because it is essential to our individual development. We *must* share. We *must* evangelize. We *must* spend ourselves in the process of saving others else we die. As we die, the church dies. We are the church.

Second only to our major evangelistic movements come our efforts to zionize those whom we have gained through evangelization efforts. This process includes all of the adjustments necessary to make us willing and enthusiastic participants in all of the activities of the church, financial and otherwise. Any branch program then must be inclusive enough to give complete and ample support to these great movements within the church.

These two general divisions of our work form our long-time program of church activity. Like any other movement there are times when it becomes necessary to shift the emphasis one way or the other. The farmer, for instance has three major fields of endeavor; he sows, he cultivates, and he reaps. Yet, at some periods of the year it is necessary that he do much more sowing of the seed than he does reaping. Unless he sows seeds,

when the time is ripe there will perhaps never be a reaping. Likewise it seems very wise that the church place its emphasis at times on the things that need most to be done then. It would seem that now is the time to place special emphasis on the task of evangelization.

This does not mean that all so-called zionic endeavor will be forgotten but that the "sowing" will be done now so that there will be a better chance of a harvest later on. We need more members, and we need better members *now* if Zion is to take more definite form later.

For this reason the church has suggested, among other things, that the Conference period of 1942-1944 be set apart for the continuation of special emphasis upon the evangelization activities of the church. This means the reviving of the flickering light of evangelization in the souls of those grown indifferent as well as the winning of souls who have never had contact with the movement of the Restoration before. But the program is broader than that.

This program has been set out rather definitely in four major suggestions:

1. Evangelism as a major emphasis in all aspects of church work.
2. Development and improvement of functioning of local priesthood and workers in the performance of missionary work and nurturing of those already won.
3. Continuation of the financial program.
4. Development of spiritual forces of the church through continuous prayerful support of the program as a whole.

Any branch program for the coming two-year period must take into consideration these major emphases and be so formulated as to give continuous support to the accomplishment of these objectives. It should be kept

in mind that these emphases can be made in complete harmony with and are an integral part of the long-time program of the work of the kingdom. The underlying principle that must never be forgotten in the formulation of any program, branch, or general church, is that the church exists that men might be saved through the processes of spiritual regeneration and growth. Anything which fails to contribute to this effort has no place in the program of the church.

#### WHAT SHOULD THE BRANCH PROGRAM INCLUDE?<sup>1</sup>

The branch program of necessity, must give consideration to the long-range program of the church but it must not stop there. It must also break down these larger objectives into activities that are within the power of the average congregation. Most of our congregations are comparatively small. These too must enjoy life-giving movements or they will surely die. In fact too many branches have died and too many more may die today because they have not been able to translate this larger general program into terms which will sustain spiritual life in the small congregation. Some things are essential in any branch or mission if that branch or mission is to continue to live. Any human body, regardless of size must have a continuous supply of oxygen as supplied in the air, and must have certain food elements to digest else it dies. Likewise any group of Saints must have certain life-giving movements among them else they die also. We list first the "musts" of any branch program. True it is that many branches today do not have some of these essential movements within them. It is also just as true that, unless some changes are brought to pass with the passing of one or two generations, these branches will be gone.

Nor can these objectives of the church be obtained unless our total teaching program is impregnated with

Christ and the Bible. Sociology, economics, and kindred sciences can never take the place of the Christian philosophy of life, although they may be made to assist in many ways. We must teach Christ and his way of life. Anything short of this is wasted effort.

### THE MISSIONARY PROGRAM

The matter of methods will be discussed in the *Missionary Manual*. Here we wish to emphasize the essentiality of such a movement to *every* branch. Forget it, and you eventually cease to function. Fail to properly administer it, and you die. How many branches can you recall that once flourished and now are gone? Further it, and you live, individually and collectively. This program may take on many forms of expression. We list here a number of ways in which the interests of evangelism may be furthered by the branch.

1. The making of friends with a view towards ultimate conversion.
2. Sunday missionary sermons.
3. Family meetings in nonmember homes.
4. Personal missionary visiting program.
5. Development of missions in accessible territory.
6. Concentration of efforts around missionary series.
7. Evangelization of *all* departmental efforts.

The wise pastor will take the lead in the development of as many phases of such a program as his congregation is able to properly care for. He will enthuse his membership and stimulate them to adapt themselves to that type of missionary activity for which they are best qualified. Some will be able to make the initial contact. Others will have the ability to nurture the prospect along to a certain point. Still others may have the power to close the decision. Some may not be very successful at any of these tasks but will be able to assist in the musical work, etc. Each member should be made

to feel that the privilege of working for the saving of souls to the kingdom is truly a privilege not to be considered lightly.

Perhaps in the field of evangelization more than in any other field do the members of a branch depend upon the pastor for direction and leadership. It *must* be done else the life of the branch dies out and the years to come will find but a "form of godliness" left where once flourished a progressive branch of the church of God. Our history today offers such examples. Every district in the church has them and will continue to have them wherever the pastorate fails to give aggressive leadership in the field of evangelistic endeavor. (See chapter on "The Place and Administration of the Evangelistic Program" for additional suggestions.)

#### RECLAIMING THE INACTIVE<sup>2</sup>

This part of the program has two angles to it. One is to prevent as many as possible becoming inactive and the other is to rewin those who do become inactive. Many people become inactive because they are never really converted to the movement of the church. Nor is this the fault of the missionary always. More often it is the fault of the local pastoral program in that it does not tie the new convert into the picture in a way that tides him over the period of adjustment necessary for new members. All too often people are baptized into the church and then promptly forgotten. Statistics show that it takes three or four years for the average convert to become satisfactorily adjusted to the branch. Here is where the pastor and his organization can prevent much of the inactivity that marks the membership of most branches.

In order to keep new members active there must be something to interest and challenge them. If the new member has come from some protestant church in the

community he is perhaps familiar with the ministry of a full-time pastor and a moving organization. He expects to find in this, Christ's church, an even more challenging type of service and quality of ministry. The matter of the quality of services will be discussed in another section of this manual. It must be said here, however, that unless services are made attractive and beautiful and spiritually powerful, many more people will become inactive as the years come and go. If your inactive list is large, look first to the quality of your services and the strength of your ministering servants.

For those who are now inactive some definite approach to the problem must be made. Ways of stimulating interest and increasing attendance must be agreed upon. No one can be anywhere near his best in the work of the kingdom unless he is a regular attendant at services. There are other factors in Christian living but church attendance must not be minimized. These people must be reached if they are to be saved.

As in every other field of ministry there is no substitute for personal contact. We, therefore, suggest that the first successful approach to the problem lies in the field of personal ministry on the part of both priesthood and laity. However, before we can minister to these people, we must know who are and who are not inactive. This calls for some sort of a survey.

## THE SURVEY

The immediate purpose of such a survey is to ascertain who is inactive. In the making of such a survey, however, it is much more satisfactory to make it more inclusive and discover other information that will be needed in the task of branch administration. There is no way of completely separating the missionary work from that of reclamation. Many of your inactives will

be members of families where there are but one or two who belong to the church. These families at once offer missionary prospects as well as the need of reclamation ministry. A very good form of survey obtains the following information for *every* family represented on the branch record. A survey that does not account for each member on the branch record is not very valuable, as it tends to miss the very ones you need to know about in the work of pastoral and evangelistic ministry. Many pastors tend to forget the inactive families. These need to be remembered if they are to be reclaimed. Let your survey sheet call for the names, ages, membership, and degree of activity of each member of the family, whether a church member or not. Let it also reveal the interest of these people spiritually and financially, their distance from church, their economic circumstances, etc. In fact, your survey should reveal such vital facts as will enable you to properly direct the work of the congregation. The pastor must remember that, first, last, and all the time *he*, the pastor, is the directing head of the local organization and if he does not direct—well, nothing happens.

The survey, when completed by the pastor or some reliable adult to whom he sees fit to entrust the task, will reveal the number of inactives, their ages, and location. It will also reveal the number of missionary prospects to be found in the same families. With this, plus the other details revealed in the survey, the pastor may then begin the task of organizing his forces to meet this need.

### THE WORK COMMENCES

In the smaller branches, oftentimes, much of this reclamation work may be done through the medium of priesthood visits. These visits should be made with the distinct purpose in mind of reinteresting these peo-

ple. They were active once, yet for some reason they lost interest. The visiting officer must know why people should attend church services. Several basic reasons should be thought out and suggested. The following list has been suggested and used successfully: (1) It is your Christian duty; (2) The sacraments are vital to Christian life; (3) It provides a place for self-examination; (4) Successful people have been regular attendants; (5) It is the greatest influence to improve family life; (6) It eliminates friction and helps in the choice of companions and gives life a constructive purpose; (7) It has a lasting influence on the lives of children; (8) The church is the only divinely ordained means of building the kingdom of God; (9) It offers a means of restimulation of "enduring things"; (10) It helps determine the color and tone of a man's life; (11) Joint worship has qualities found nowhere else; (12) It is the most persistent and inviting cultural agency in the world; (13) The church gives most through demanding most; (14) Wickedness is organized—righteousness ought to be; (15) It provides a place to meet local and general officers.

In many cases the membership will accept the responsibility of "adopting" inactive families. These active families or members make social contacts with the inactives and, in most any legitimate manner, attempt to regain the confidence of the inactives and again add them to the list of active workers. Telephone committees, post card committees—any form of contact that will properly approach these people have value. The personal contact remains the most effective. The adopting of families, etc., will generally fizzle out in a very short time unless the work is stimulated continuously and direction is given by the pastor. Again may it be said that this work depends on the pastor for direction.

## THE PRIESTHOOD MUST FUNCTION<sup>3</sup>

Much of the responsibility of priesthood functioning rests upon the shoulders of the pastor. His is the task of organizing these men according to their several abilities. These men must be trained and developed. It is true that at times the pastor may not be much better qualified than the other members of the priesthood, yet as the pastor of the branch it is his responsibility to take the lead and give direction to this work. Each man of the priesthood should have certain definite responsibilities. These assignments should be made by the pastor and the program of work developed well in advance so that each man may know and understand just what his duties are. In the assignment of responsibilities such factors as age, health, employment, home conditions, special training, and ability, etc., must be taken into consideration, yet each man should have some responsibility he can perform. In far too many branches there may be from two to six or more members of the priesthood, one of whom was elected or appointed pastor, and the others remain merely members of the priesthood and feel no special responsibility.

In this respect it should be suggested that the responsibility of keeping track of attendance naturally rests upon the teacher, if there be one in the branch. This does not mean just the keeping of a record of attendance but the utilization of the data that such a record reveals while those in question are still easy to win back to the fold.

## INACTIVE PRIESTHOOD

Many times the problem of branch inactivity starts with the priesthood members themselves. These men should be labored with in an attempt to rewin them to the tasks of ministry. When, after patient efforts have

been made to rewin them, they insist on remaining willfully inactive, it is very doubtful if they should be continued in their priesthood rights. It is difficult indeed to create much enthusiasm among your inactive members if they can continue to point to cases of known willful inactivity among the priesthood. Many times priesthood, as well as members, will respond to a definite program of activity even though they were not interested in some haphazard way of conducting the branch activities at some former time.

### PRIESTHOOD MEETINGS

In most places the priesthood should be called together periodically for instruction and constructive discussion. Again the responsibility rests upon the pastor to give leadership to this movement. In a few places perhaps regular formal meetings may not be practical. Even then the pastor should keep contact with his priesthood, and they should be his chief counsel in all matters of branch administration. It is highly desirable that the priesthood meet at least monthly for study. The *Church and Evangelism* is a very fine text for such work. The *Priesthood Manual* can also be used and this *Pastoral Manual* is being produced for the same purpose. Programs should be outlined and developed by the pastor with the full knowledge and co-operation of the priesthood, yet the priesthood should not come to feel that the pastor does not rest under the responsibility of moving forward and giving leadership. The priesthood form his chief counsel, not his board of managers.

### PLANNING AHEAD

Programs and services must be planned well in advance. The pastor who notifies Brother So-and-so on

Friday night that he is to preach Sunday morning is not fair to either his brother or the congregation. There are those who pride themselves on being "minute men," yet history backs us up when we suggest that the higher quality of ministry comes from those who take their work seriously and work long and hard on that which they attempt to do. No doubt much of our inactivity on the part of membership can be traced directly to such poorly prepared preaching and such laxity in priesthood ministry of other types.

The wise pastor will make his schedules out well in advance. At least a month, if not two or more, should be planned somewhat in detail if the best is to be expected. Such programs should not be so unwieldly that they will not give way to an emergency or the visiting general official, etc. Work must be planned, however, if it is to be done. A general program for the year, with its general purposes related to special days and outstanding events, should always be in the thinking of the pastor if not actually written in the calendar. The year should be divided so that the proper emphasis can be placed upon special efforts at the proper time.

When we speak of assignments we do not mean preaching assignments alone. Every movement of the priesthood membership should be worthy of consideration and preparation. Prayer meetings, priesthood visits, missionary services, in fact all of the priesthood duties become richer and more powerful in direct proportion to the preparation made. There are notable exceptions, of course, but they are exceptions and not the rule. The man who insists on coasting and slights his preparation, be he pastor or deacon, soon finds his service becoming ineffectual.

#### THE WOMEN'S GROUP

The women of the branch should be considered as one of the strong factors in the success of the work.

Theirs is not the responsibility of financing the branch, although they may assist if they desire. Theirs is the greater field of ministry in their own homes and in the homes of their friends and neighbors. These are the women who will make many of the contacts in the attempt to rewin the inactives. These are the women who will make many of the missionary contacts. These are the women who will carry much of the responsibility of the departments. These are the women who will further the social activities of the branch, prepare the suppers, and do the thousand and one things necessary to make the house of worship homelike and attractive.

The wise pastor will guard closely to see that the proper woman is chosen to head this important department of the work. Care must be taken that the women's group does not become a group of slaves, giving their time and strength primarily to the financing of the branch or in doing the work of other divisions. Theirs is a great task and one that will be best done if their program is well balanced, including both study and development activities as well as work projects. They may assist in most of the tasks of the congregation yet must remember that the pastor is just as much the general director of their activities as he is of the activities of the priesthood. The woman's group exists only that it might supplement the work of the other departments in the saving of souls. Anything short of this purpose has no place in the program of activities.

While the wise pastor will not attempt to dominate the women's activities in the detail of their operations, yet he will not withdraw himself from their association to the extent that they feel that he is not a part of their movement. Rather will he work with them, suggesting ways and means by which they will be able to assist in the total program of the branch. This type of co-opera-

tion makes for better balanced programs and more constructive activity.

## THE ZION'S LEAGUE

What has been said concerning the relationship of the pastor to the women's group is essentially true of the pastor's relationship to the Zion's League. Ordinarily he will not take the active lead in the League unless he be a young man of the proper age. It is his duty and opportunity however to work with the League and suggest to them the ways in which they may further the program of the branch. The pastor will acquaint himself with the possibilities in the field of interesting programs and do all within his power to give stability and continuity to the movement. In many places the Leaguers become a most powerful factor in rewinning inactive members and in making missionary openings. These possibilities must be sought out and capitalized on wherever possible.

It must be remembered that these Leaguers are *not* the "Church of tomorrow" as many have been wont to say. They are an active part of the church of today and as such should take their place in the activity of the branch. There is a tendency in some places to feel that the success of the whole branch depends on the youth of the group. This, too, is unwise. The youth are a part of the church but so are the older folk. A proper balance should be maintained in this respect.

What is known as the "Friendship Hour" has been developed by many pastors for their Leaguers. This is ordinarily held on Sunday evening, following the evening preaching service. This is a meeting of, for, and by the youth. The continuous intervention or attendance of the older folks generally tends to discourage the very thing these services try to stimulate—participation on the part of youth. Ordinarily these services

are rather informal. A brief worship service, a forum or panel discussion, a play or skit, true or false tests, refreshments—in fact most anything reasonable may find its way into this service. These too need direction on the part of the pastor, but he must be careful to make his leadership less conspicuous than is necessary in some other departments.

Leaguers generally find their places in most every part of the branch program, missionary, reclamation, devotional, financial, etc. Give them a chance and some general direction, and let their enthusiasm work for you.

### THE SOCIAL ACTIVITIES

Social activities are just as essential to a well-balanced program as are any other activities. When people die socially, spiritual decay sets in. Criticism and suspicion take possession of us when we fail to get acquainted with and understand each other. The branch program should face the social needs of the congregation frankly. In some of the larger branches the needs will be much greater than in the smaller groups. Each branch does have such a need however.

In some cases this work may well be placed in the immediate care of the women's department. In many places now it is proving very practical to place this responsibility in the hands of the director of adult activities. Regardless of who or what department provides for it, the pastor must remember that, after all, this is another of his responsibilities, and that he has just as much responsibility in giving general direction and oversight to the social needs of his branch as he has in giving supervision to the preaching service.

The program must include sufficient social activities to meet the normal needs of the congregation, else it will fail. It must be remembered too that in these social activities as in all others there must be purpose, and

that purpose must be the furthering of the branch program in such a way that it assists in the saving of souls. Care must be taken to keep down all tendencies to gossip and criticise church officials or others.

What better opportunity will you have to invite inactive members back to church than to a social evening with the congregation? What better place to invite your nonmember friends to get acquainted with your congregation than when you meet to eat and play together? Suppers, dinners, fun fests, community sings, home movies, ice cream socials, wiener roasts, skating parties—in fact there is no end of things that are good and that can be adapted to the needs of the congregation in a way that will assist in the building of the kingdom. The wise pastor will survey this field carefully and give direction, as this is a field in which mistakes may be easily made by good but unwise leaders.

#### CHURCH SCHOOL AND OTHER DEPARTMENTS

Whose business is it to see that the church school functions properly? It is the church school director's. The director does have the responsibility of the immediate direction of the school, but the pastor, as always, is the general director. The church school is just as much a part of his program and responsibility as is the prayer service on Wednesday night. The program of the church school should look definitely towards the bringing into the church of a large number of members each year. No more fertile missionary field exists in the average branch than that offered by the church school. The pastor will be always alert to seek out methods that will increase the attendance of the church school both as to members and nonmembers. He will counsel his director to be sure all of the church school activities are so planned as to contribute to the total program of the church. Special days will be given consideration.

Pre-baptismal classes will be provided for and as many nonmembers urged to attend as possible. In short the wise pastor will look upon this part of his total program as being one of the most important and will devise ways and means by which the members of the church school will contribute to the total program of the church. The junior church will be recognized as an important part of this movement and proper preparation and provision will be made for their comfort and advancement. The great purpose of saving souls must remain ever in the thinking of the church school leaders. The responsibility of offering interesting and attractive services should never be forgotten. Many youth become discouraged and lose interest during the adolescent period because our church schools at times tend to be a form through which we push ourselves each Sabbath morning at a certain hour.

The pastor should strive to put life and purpose in this phase of his branch program. High dividends are the rule where leaders actually see and develop the opportunities offered by the church school.

Many other factors might be given consideration in many branches. Age groups of all kinds, special interest groups such as camera clubs, etc., all have a part in the balanced program where there is the existing need. The pastor should not forget these possible activities but again should be cautioned that these things exist not merely that personal interests might be advanced, but that through such advancement nonmember friends might be attracted to our way of life. Special interest groups have no place in the church program unless they can be made to contribute, at least indirectly, to the total program of the branch. Care will be given to keep such groups from isolating themselves from the general branch activities. The alert pastor will utilize each and every opportunity that is presented that

will assist, yet *he must be careful not to so over-organize the group that there is no time left for the basic movements of the congregation.* In other words it is possible to become so busy with the lesser organizations that the priesthood have no time left to study and visit the membership. Members, even, become so busy at other church activities that they can no longer attend the regular congregational services such as the prayer services and preaching services. To be one's best it is necessary that these regular church services become a part of our personal program. The pastor should attempt to give such direction to the enlargement of his program that the proper balance is struck. This will provide ample challenge and activity for each member and yet leave time and opportunity for each member to attend to the really important things of the kingdom.

It becomes very essential for each pastor to make serious effort to protect the regular services from the ravages of lesser services and committee meetings, etc. In many places the membership has been so educated that not even private dinner parties or social events are scheduled on the regular hours set apart for congregational services. There are those places yet, however, where such recognition of church responsibility has not been acknowledged. This is something that cannot be done successfully by dictatorial means. Rather should it be a task of education and be the result of the desire of the congregation to develop and advance.

Many minor things might be done to further the program of the church through the operation of the branch program. The important thing, however, is that the pastor first sees clearly for himself what it is he is attempting to do. Having seen the purpose, then through counsel with his priesthood, he is in a position to advance the work by giving aggressive leadership to the task. Missionary work *must* be increased in practically

every branch in the church. If it is not increased in many branches, they will surely die. Those who have become inactive *must* be reclaimed so far as possible. These are movements that preserve the spiritual life of those who engage in the task as well as create a new life in the one ministered to. Branch programs and services *must* be made so attractive and so spiritually powerful that they attract both member and nonmember to worship. The debt reduction program *must* go on. We must be freed from debt in order that we may tackle the problems of missionary expansion and social reconstruction. The membership and the leadership of the church *must* become prayerfully conscious of the needs of the church and be willing to carry these problems on their minds and in their hearts as they move forward in the attempt to further the work.

These demands on membership should bring forth an increase in both the quality and quantity of leadership offered the church by the priesthood and especially in that offered by the pastor. The branch program depends on the pastor. Its general direction, its stimulation, its continual development awaits the response of devoted pastors who along with the priesthood accept their responsibilities seriously.

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1. *The Priesthood Manual*, p. 5.

2. *The Church and Evangelism*, pp. 243, 368.

3. *The Priesthood Journal*, July, 1934, p. 41; July, 1936; January, 1939.

## THE PLACE AND ADMINISTRATION OF THE SACRAMENTS AND ORDINANCES

### *Definitions:*

"Sacrament, is derived from the Latin word *sacramentum*, which signifies an oath, particularly the oath taken by soldiers to be true to their country and general.

"The word was adopted by the writers of the Latin church, to denote those ordinances of religion by which Christians came under an obligation of obedience to God, and which obligation, they supposed, was equally sacred with that of an oath."<sup>1</sup>

"As a technical legal term it was used of the sum which the two parties to a suit deposited *in sacro*, and of which the winner of the suit recovered his part, while the loser forfeited his to the *aerarium*. Hence it came to mean the suit itself, *causa controversia*."<sup>2</sup>

"An outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace; one of the solemn religious ceremonies, as baptism, the Eucharist, etc., enjoined by Christ or by the church."<sup>3</sup>

### SACRAMENTS HAVE A PLACE

From the foregoing definitions, we conclude that the word "sacrament" possesses several meanings, which, in our consideration, may well be applied to our understanding and usage of the word as a church, viz.:

1. That a sacrament is a religious ceremony, enjoined upon us by Christ and the church;
2. That it is a visible indication of the movement of divine forces within us to bring about a unity with God in the achieving of his will;

3. That through the sacraments we enter into an obligation to or vow with God;
- 4 And that through this vow with God we also obligate ourselves to our friends, who, with us and with him, are engaged in a mutual task.

Sacraments, therefore, have a definite place in our worship and in our unfolding correspondence with God, the source of all life. They help us in our approach to him. In fact, were it not for them we would be unable to find our way out of the maze of human tradition, uncertainty, and the inefficacy of our own ways

### ORDINANCES ESSENTIAL

The Lord in a certain revelation on priesthood in 1832 makes this thought clear in no uncertain tone. He says:

"And this greater priesthood administereth the gospel that holdeth the key of the mysteries of the kingdom, even the key of the knowledge of God. Therefore, in the ordinances thereof the power of godliness is manifest; and without the ordinances thereof, and the authority of the priesthood, the power of godliness is not manifest unto men in the flesh; for without this, no man can see the face of God, even the Father, and live."<sup>4</sup>

### SACRAMENTS AND ORDINANCES LIFT US TO HIGHER LEVELS

These rites and institutions, called sacraments and ordinances, possess no power in and of themselves, and only when they are administered by divine authority, and entered into by those participating with a deep sense of reverence for their source, their purpose, and their need, will there come the blessing designed through them. They are the vehicles of God in working with and ministering to suffering humanity in an effort to lift man up to higher levels of righteousness that are

not obtainable when left to himself. God does not need them, but we must have and obey them if we would see beyond ourselves, and that with which we are environed, to the kingdom. There is great need, therefore, that their simplicity be preserved, and that only those, which, in the mind of God, are essential to man's ultimate success over the forces of evil shall be recognized and observed. Furthermore, it is important they be preserved from excessive ceremonialism, for this will create an unneeded formality which will destroy the spontaneity of feeling and expression in those who seek to observe them. If this is not done, their purpose will be frustrated and worship will become a lifeless form. However, that degree of dignity in keeping with their source and purpose should always be maintained.

#### EXCESSIVE CEREMONIALISM DETRIMENTAL

One of the indications of spiritual retrogression that finally brought about what we call the apostasy from the ancient order was the tendency on the part of the early Christian church to introduce ceremonies not warranted in the law. It appears that when there began to be a waning of spiritual fervor among the people, unprovided rituals and ceremonies were introduced to appeal to their fancy and superstition. There is meaning to and power in the sacraments and ordinances only when an appreciation of their spiritual value accompanies them. When this quality of the Christian life is lacking, no human attempt to adorn with ceremonial frills or to devise new ones can succeed in any measurable degree in meeting the basic need of the human soul. Mosheim, writing of that early day, says:

"In this century many unnecessary rites and ceremonies were added to the Christian worship, the introduction of which was extremely offensive to wise and good men. These changes, while they destroyed the beautiful

simplicity of the gospel, were naturally pleasing to the gross multitude, who are more delighted with the pomp and splendor of external institutions, than with the native charms of rational and solid piety, and who generally give little attention to any objects but those which strike their outward senses.”<sup>5</sup>

“I. To enumerate the rites and institutions that were added, in this century, to the Christian worship, would require a volume of considerable size. The acts of councils, and the records left us by the most celebrated ancient writers, are the sources from which the curious may draw a particular and satisfactory account of this matter; and to these we refer such as are desirous of something more than a general view of the subject under consideration. Several of these ancient writers, uncorrupted by the contagious examples of the times in which they lived, have ingenuously acknowledged, that true piety and virtue were smothered, as it were, under that enormous burden of ceremonies under which they lay groaning in this century. This evil was owing, partly to the ignorance and dishonesty of the clergy, partly to the calamities of the times, which were extremely unfavorable to the pursuit of knowledge, and to the culture of the mind; and partly, indeed, to the natural depravity of imperfect mortals, who are much more disposed to worship with the eye than with the heart, and are more ready to offer to the Deity the laborious pomp of an outward service, than the nobler, yet simple oblation of pious dispositions and holy affections.”<sup>6</sup>

There is no human institution or addition to the divine way that can adequately substitute the simple and humble piety of a contrite soul. Sacraments and ordinances are for the purpose of helping us reach out from the haziness of human and material concern with a more steady and purposeful grasp on that which will enable us to reach up to him who seeks our exaltation. Any-

thing that detracts from this purpose is not only superfluous but deterrent, and consequently detrimental.

As a church, we believe the sacraments and ordinances which we observe and practice are in harmony with the Scriptures and the requirement of the human soul in its adjustment to God's way of life, and therefore they are divinely instituted. In the paragraphs that follow, we discuss briefly these sacraments and ordinances.

### BAPTISM

Baptism as a sacrament and command of God was given to man in the very beginning. This was necessary because of man's fall as a part of the divinely devised plan for his release from sin. It was revealed to him by God himself, and by the Spirit of the Lord was the first man baptized.<sup>7</sup> Such a course would not have been taken if baptism were not essential or did not fill a need in the process of man's adjustment to the higher law. Its importance, therefore, is made clear.

#### *More Than Immersion:*

Christian baptism is more than immersion. It must be preceded by faith in God and repentance of one's sins,<sup>8</sup> otherwise it would be little more than the mechanical act of immersion, and its sacramental value be lost to the candidate. Real faith in God will lead one to forsake his unrighteousness through repentance, thus placing him worthily before God for baptism. In this way does baptism become a means of remitting sin, and in this way only can it be justly said it is for the remission of sins. Submission of oneself for baptism grows out of the movement of these principles in his life and creates within him a desire to conform to the God-revealed covenant—the gospel of the Son of God.

### *Differs From Other Sacraments:*

Baptism differs from certain other sacraments because all men are required to obey it, provided, of course, they have reached the age of accountability, are teachable, have faith in God, and repent of their sins.<sup>9</sup> Certain loss will come to those who know, but are unwilling to follow through with their knowledge in obedience to this and other requirements of the law. Agency, when properly used, brings blessing, but when unwisely employed inevitably brings loss and regret.

### *A Symbol:*

No more beautiful symbol is found in the entire plan of redemption than that seen in this sacrament. Baptism is to the converted person a symbol of death and burial—the death of sin in his mortal body. It is also the symbol of life—life as he rises from his burial in the water to walk a new life in Christ. Thus is dramatized the burial of sin and the rising of righteousness.<sup>10</sup>

### *A Door of Entrance:*

By this sacrament the candidate passes through the door of entrance into “the house of God which is the church of the living God,”<sup>11</sup> and becomes a member of His family on the earth. Welcome, indeed, is he who enters this house through the door of baptism—this house that should be known to all men for the hospitality it extends to the weary traveler along life’s highway. Likewise is it a gateway into broad, expansive, and unexplored fields of service which but await the regeneration of man to discover their uncounted spiritual riches. Blessed, too, is he whose “eyes look right on,”<sup>12</sup> unperturbed by the distractions of an ungodly world, and without reservation gives himself to the task of doing that which reflects the righteousness of Saints.

### *A Pledge:*

Baptism is an acknowledgment and a pledge by the one baptized, that he is willing to cast his lot with the other members of the Spiritual household and work to achieve a common goal. It is a vow, in other words, that he will labor with his brethren in their mutual task, as well as a vow with God that he will obey him and keep his commandments as long as he shall live.<sup>18</sup> A more appropriate symbol could not be used for such a worthy relationship.

### *Children Under Eight Years not Eligible:*

Children who have not reached the age of accountability are not subjects for baptism.<sup>14</sup> They do not understand, they cannot have faith, and they have done nothing requiring repentance, therefore, they do not come under the need of this sacrament. They are redeemed through the atonement of our Lord. Children under eight years of age have only a meager knowledge of God and his ways, but if they are properly taught before that time, their understanding will be sufficient when they reach that age to warrant their entering into a covenant relationship with him.<sup>15</sup>

### *Authority Required:*

The Apostle John records Jesus as saying, "But he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. To him the porter openeth,"<sup>16</sup> and "I am the door of the sheep."<sup>17</sup> These words possess meaning and relate to that which is basic to our philosophy. Webster defines door as "The movable hinged or sliding frame or barrier by which an opening for access, as into a house, may be closed. 2. "A doorway." Therefore, a door is both the barrier and the opening. The logical deduction is that baptism is the door, or doorway,

and Christ is the barrier or power that must move or function before one can pass through the doorway. This emphasizes the necessity of the authority of Christ, either in himself or in those who represent him on the earth. It also gives meaning to the words of the Master found in other recordings of his sayings, such as, "As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you."<sup>18</sup> Therefore, we conclude this holy sacrament is so important that the authority of heaven must act in its observance.

### *Respect for Administrative Officers:*

All ordained men who possess authority to baptize by virtue of their ordinations should not be unmindful of the ethics which should always characterize men of God. They should never arrange for and proceed with baptisms within the jurisdictions of other ministers without their knowledge and consent. Otherwise there might arise complications that could result in serious difficulty, aside from the unethical aspect. This does not mean that only pastors shall baptize within their jurisdictions, but that, in the interest of the church, they should be respected.

### *Special Days:*

While special days may be helpful to a pastor in programming his work in an endeavor to appeal to and work with as many of his congregation as possible, there should always be felt and manifest in all the movements of branch life the missionary spirit. And this spirit should not be confined to a special day once or twice a year. If there are those who seek baptism, either children or adults, and they are prepared for that ordinance, they should not have to wait for the special day that may be scheduled in the branch program for several weeks or months later.<sup>19</sup> Permit the Spirit of Christ

to move with freedom in the hearts of men, and do not circumscribe it with a program that is too rigid and mechanical.

### *Setting for the Service:*

There is necessity for a proper setting whenever the sacrament of baptism is observed. If it is to be held by a stream or a body of water, let all necessary preparations be made and the service conducted with proper dignity so that the candidate or candidates will not have occasion to look back upon it with regret. If it is to be held in a building, let the same care be taken, and, if possible, build around the service that which will enhance it in spiritual meaning to those who may be present. Such an occasion might well be used to preach a sermon on baptism that will be as helpful to the membership of the church as to those who are not members who may be present. This ordinance possesses striking missionary appeal and we should recognize it and use it to our advantage.

In planning a baptismal service, the pastor should be careful and not overlook such arrangements and decorations that will make the surroundings cheerful. A special day, or a thought-to-be special candidate should not receive more attention in this respect than any other day or candidate. Let not the day, the adorning of the surroundings or personalities over-shadow the act. To do this would be to lose sight of the spiritual significance this beautiful sacrament possesses.<sup>20</sup>

### LAYING ON OF HANDS

The laying on of hands is essential to our church life and "symbolizes the union between God and man" and "the surrender of man to the divine control."<sup>21</sup> It dramatizes the extended hand of God in man's be-

half. The fact that this ordinance is designed to be a means of bestowing spiritual power, and the further fact that those holding the Melchisedec Priesthood are charged with this ministry,<sup>22</sup> indicates the vital place it holds in our sacramental and spiritual life. It should be observed at all times with the utmost consideration for its exalted purpose. As with other sacraments and ordinances, it should be performed only when the need exists, and with the dignity and humility befitting an approach to God and submission to his will. There is no place for irreverence in the observance of this or any other sacrament. The officiating minister stands as the mouthpiece for Christ in ministering to those who *seek* divine blessing, and this calls for sober-mindedness on the part of both. In the following paragraphs we give brief consideration to the purposes for which the laying on of hands has been instituted

### *Confirmation:*

Man is a dual creature—flesh and spirit. It is imperative that his spirit be brought in touch with the Spirit of God through a sacrament designed for that purpose, even as his body is immersed in the water. The two sacraments, baptism in water and confirmation by the imposition of hands for the gift of the Holy Spirit, combine to give birth to the one seeking a more complete relationship with God as a child of the kingdom.<sup>23</sup> The confirmation brings to him the seal of his adoption and places him in a position to receive and enjoy the Holy Spirit as an abiding comforter.<sup>24</sup> This Spirit is the earnest of his inheritance,<sup>25</sup> and will continue its ministry unto him so long as he walks in righteousness until “the purchased possession”<sup>26</sup> of immortality and eternal life is obtained.

Only those who have been baptized by proper authority are entitled to receive the laying on of hands in con-

firmation, and, according to the Lord in one of his revealments, care should be exercised that those who have been baptized receive adequate instruction before they are confirmed.<sup>27</sup> This does not mean that a certain number of days or weeks should always elapse between baptism and confirmation, as, in many instances, those baptized are already well informed in things pertaining to the church. The wise procedure for us to follow is to properly instruct all those who are seeking membership before they are baptized. This applies to parents in their responsibility to their children, and to members and ministers in their evangelistic work. Then, if perchance, there are those who do not understand through failure of others to properly instruct them, "The elders or priests are to have a sufficient time to expound all things concerning the church of Christ to their understanding." Our alertness to the need of sufficient understanding on the part of the candidate or candidates should not suddenly manifest itself, but should be in evidence from the time we begin our evangelistic effort with them. This would seem to be the part of wisdom. To do otherwise, and to make it the rule, would seem to encourage the baptism of those who have not been properly instructed.

If there should be those in our confirmation meetings who are not of the church, but who are seeking the truth, they should be permitted to remain.<sup>28</sup> The meetings should be so arranged and conducted that they will breathe the spirit of fellowship, for those being confirmed are by this ordinance entering into the fellowship of Saints, the most sacred of communions. From these meetings the Saints should go forth under the impulsion of the divine Spirit to "go on unto perfection,"<sup>29</sup> and to sow the seeds of the gospel in the lives of those with whom they come in contact, that they, too, may come to a knowledge of the truth and enjoy its

privileges and blessings. At these meetings, the confirmation ordinance should not be relegated to second place, but, when at all possible, should be made the center of thought, with hymns, scripture reading, sermon, and prayer, all contributing to the sacredness of this ritual.

### *Ordination:*

This sacrament symbolizes the outstretched hands of God through those who ordain, and the union that is made possible with God through the bestowal of power to represent him. To be set apart to the priesthood is to accept responsibility, to be a servant and to become a leader of men in holiness and in all good works.<sup>30</sup> It means that one's time is not so much his own as it was before. By it he consecrates himself to the ministry of love and service to his fellow men.

Men are not called and ordained because they are fully prepared when they are set apart, or because they are better than their brethren, but because the Lord sees in them potentialities for ministry in the particular offices to which they are called. A question that every ordained man should remember was once propounded by the prophet Moses to Korah, i.e.:

"Seemeth it but a small thing unto you, that the God of Israel hath separated you from the congregation of Israel, to bring you near to himself to do the service of the tabernacle of the Lord, and to stand before the congregation to minister unto them?"<sup>31</sup>

Ordination, therefore, means (1) separation "from the congregation of Israel," (2) to be brought "near" to God "to do the service of the tabernacle of the Lord," and (3) "to stand before the congregation to minister unto them." Only in the measure of one's nearness to and experiences with God can he minister effectively to others.

This service is an excellent time to impress upon all present the significance of ordination, and, as with other ordinances, the entire service can well be built around the purpose of the meeting, instead of making the ordination secondary. It possesses a strong appeal, both pastorally and evangelistically, and the simple dignity with which it should be observed will establish this appeal in the hearts of those present.<sup>32</sup>

### *Blessing:*

Blessing of children who have not reached the age of accountability is in harmony with the pattern set by the Master himself when he was on the earth.<sup>33</sup> By it children are presented to the Father for his protecting care. This ordinance is one of the most touching, and consequently one of the most appealing in the church. Is it not reasonable to believe that blessing and protection will follow a child thus blessed; and also influence for good the lives of the parents and those present who witness it? Otherwise the ordinance loses its spiritual value.

This rite should never be lightly observed or made incidental or secondary as is the case in some places. We are told that years ago in a certain place the officiating minister, when requested to bless a child, left the rostrum and went to the rear of the building where the child was held by his mother and there blessed him. How much better for the ritual to have a definite place in the service and for the parents to bring their child to the altar, there standing with reverently bowed heads while the elder or elders officiating present the child to the throne of grace for divine favor.

Some have assumed from the words of the revelation concerning the blessing of children that they cannot be blessed except in a public meeting.<sup>34</sup> While this is the regular order and should be followed carefully by the

membership and ministry, it should not preclude the blessing of a child in a home when circumstances and conditions make it inadvisable or impossible to go "before the church." "But wisdom is justified of her children,"<sup>35</sup> said the Master when he was here.

There likewise is provision made in the divine order for the office of evangelist, one of whose functions is to give blessings to the membership by the imposition of hands.<sup>36</sup> Rarely, if ever, should this be done in a meeting open to the public. The purpose and nature of the ceremony would indicate the need of quiet and a place free from intrusion. A patriarchal blessing that is given following preparation by all concerned should be a source of strength to the one blessed. And this it will be, if the proper attitude is in evidence. Without it, of course, a blessing cannot be given. This ordinance is rich with a pastoral ministry, but we see little opportunity for any direct evangelistic contribution in it.

### *Administering to the Sick:*

"Is any among you afflicted? let him pray. Is any merry? let him sing psalms. Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him."<sup>37</sup>

Thus is given instruction by the apostle regarding an ordinance that can bring, when properly administered and accompanied by faith, greater relief to those physically in need than any other. In the language of James, there is a difference between those who are afflicted and the physically sick. Too many times we fail to see this and do not follow the advice given in these words. This blessing is promised to the believer. It is not to make believers. Over-zealous members often embarrass the

church and the elders by influencing nonmembers to request administration. This should never be done.

This ordinance also possesses a rich pastoral ministry and should not be emphasized evangelistically by either the members or ministry. This does not prevent the elders from administering to those not of the church, if they have faith and earnestly seek God with a contrite spirit, but the church should not go out in search of them for that purpose.

Wisdom would indicate that observance of this ceremony should not be made spectacular, but carried out with simplicity in keeping with the place and conditions existing at the time. A quiet place free from intrusion and disturbance should be selected. The approach to God should not be made in haste, but with a serenity and poise that bespeak faith in him and in his ordinances.<sup>38</sup>

### THE SACRAMENT OF THE BREAD AND WINE

In this beautiful sacrament, we have one of the most important rites of the church. It is important for a number of reasons, a few of which are given in the following paragraphs, viz.:

#### *It is a Memorial:*

The Lord's Supper, as we call it, is a memorial instituted to commemorate the sacrificial death of our Lord—the shedding of his blood and the giving of his body on the Cross. At the Cross sin is seen at its worst because it took the best, and love is seen at its best because he made the sacrifice willingly. A sacrifice of this type is worthy of perpetual commemoration among those who come under the power of his grace, as do his covenant children. The prayers of blessing make clear that it is in “remembrance” of him.<sup>39</sup>

### *A Reaffirmation of the Baptismal Covenant:*

The prayer of blessing on the bread states that it is a "witness unto thee, O God, the eternal Father, that they are willing to take upon them the name of thy Son, and always remember him and keep his commandments which he has given them, that they may always have his spirit to be with them," and the prayer on the wine is similar and covers the same thought. Thus we see that through the emblems of his body and his blood we renew our vow with him that we will do his will. To renew this pledge with God in a public meeting among friends helps us to sense our social responsibility as well as our duty to him.

### *A Source of Life:*

Jesus taught that through the eating of his flesh and the drinking of his blood life would be given.<sup>40</sup> He did not mean his literal flesh and his literal blood, as the doctrine of transubstantiation teaches, because he had already taught, "I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world."<sup>41</sup> As he lived by the living Father, so we live by the living Son, if we keep his commandments. We see in and obtain through these emblems the life of which Christ spoke, without which we would be impotent to build his kingdom.

### *We Are Close Communionists:*

The sacrament of the Lord's Supper is for those of the household, the vine, the body, the church. The direct flow of life within a body is to and for that body. The life of the vine is free to function within the vine.<sup>42</sup> Since through the sacrament we repledge ourselves to God and to his church, only those who have made the pledge in the waters of baptism can re-pledge.<sup>43</sup> Defi-

nite instruction has been given certain ordained ministers that they are to administer the sacrament, and that certain standards must be held by those who partake, indicating the need of authority and righteousness in its observance.

The Lord instructs us that we are not to cast anyone out of our sacrament meetings, "who is earnestly seeking the kingdom: I speak this concerning those who are not of the church,"<sup>44</sup> but He does not say they should be served. Ofttimes nonmembers are embarrassed when invited to a service of this nature because they have not been informed beforehand of our custom. When necessary a statement can be made by the minister in charge of the service in such a way as to avoid any embarrassment coming to them.<sup>45</sup>

#### *It Ministers Pastorally:*

The pastoral ministry of the church is outstanding in this sacrament, and in the measure that the membership are spiritually revived and go from the service with renewed determination to live more righteously and to carry the gospel to others, there will be missionary value in it. It is to help us keep close to God, that we in turn may lead others to him.<sup>46</sup>

### MARRIAGE

While marriage is a sacrament, it is, nevertheless, in a different category than the sacraments previously considered. Marriage is the recognized institution by which the home is organized, and is entered into by all people regardless of their religious faith. Some governments recognize marriages performed by regularly ordained ministers without restrictions, some with certain restrictions, and others will not recognize them at all. The governments in the last group solemnize all marriages themselves through their designated officials. In

this sacrament, as in none other, the church has said that marriages performed by other authority will be recognized.<sup>47</sup> Marriage, therefore, is a social requirement in addition to its spiritual value as the first step to organize society. It is the oldest institution in existence, and was organized by the Creator himself, indicating that it is both enduring as an institution of value and divine.<sup>48</sup>

### *Should Be Solemnized in Public Meeting:*

The fact that marriage is a requirement of society and that other authority than our own is legal does not minimize the importance or dignity of it. By all means, when at all possible, the marriages of our people should be solemnized by the ministers of our own church, and in a public meeting.<sup>49</sup> There are at least two good reasons why the observance of this sacrament should be in a public meeting, viz.: firstly, that the principals might realize they have a responsibility to society, and secondly, that society might sense its responsibility to the principals. Our people should be taught that, while other authority is legal, it is much better for them to dedicate their lives to the marital relationship under the ministration of one whom God has called in a meeting where there are sympathetic and understanding relatives and friends.

### *Should Contact the Pastor:*

Those of the church contemplating marriage should contact the pastor of their branch or mission before consummating their plans, and whatever is done let it be done with the knowledge, and, if possible, the approval of their spiritual adviser. No minister, whatever his rank may be, should proceed to solemnize a marriage within the jurisdiction of another without the knowledge of the one in charge of that jurisdiction. This is

only simple courtesy and a basic statute in the unwritten code of ethics. Oftentimes disastrous results can be prevented in the experience of those marrying if this procedure is followed.

### *Physical Examinations:*

In some states there are laws requiring physical examinations for those marrying. No one living in a state with laws of this kind should be guilty of running away from them by going to a state for the marriage where such laws do not exist. The laws are for our own protection, and our progeny demand that we protect them. And furthermore, no minister who knows that this is done by the principals should perform the ceremony, whether he is of the state where the laws are in force, or in one where there are none. Discipline for both the principals and the minister should not be neglected if they are guilty of this serious offence. It will be a better day for society when every state has adequate legislation covering this question. We, who have such high ideals, need not wait for compulsory legislation before we do what we know to be right. We should set the pace by leading the way in this and in other movements for a better society.<sup>50</sup>

## CONCLUSION

Therefore, we see, as was said in the beginning of this treatise, that the sacraments and ordinances have an authoritative place in the church, and contribute immeasurably to the quality of our saintly lives when administered by an accepted ministry and observed meaningfully by all.

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1. *The Popular and Critical Encyclopedia*, volume 3, p. 1503.
  2. *Dictionary of the Bible*, by Hastings, volume 4, p. 327.
  3. Webster.
  4. *Doctrine and Covenants* 83:3.

5. *Mosheim's Church History*, volume 1, book 1, The Second Century, part 2, chapter 4, p. 66.
6. *Ibid.* volume 1, book 2, The Fifth Century, part 2, chapter 4, p. 146.
7. Genesis 6: 67, Inspired Version.
8. Acts 8 37; 2. 37, 38.
9. *Doctrine and Covenants* 17. 20.
10. Romans 6. 4, 5.
11. 1 Timothy 3. 15, 16, Inspired Version.
12. Proverbs 4: 25.
13. *Doctrine and Covenants* 17. 7.
14. *Doctrine and Covenants* 17. 20, 68 4.
15. See the *Priesthood Journal* for October, 1935, p. 45.
16. John 10: 2, 3.
17. John 10: 7.
18. John 20. 21.
19. Acts 8: 37.
20. See the *Priesthood Journal* for October, 1939, on subject of "Baptism."
21. *The Church and Evangelism*, p. 93.
22. *Doctrine and Covenants* 83. 7; 104. 9.
23. John 3: 5.
24. John 14: 16, 17.
25. Ephesians 1: 14.
26. Ephesians 1. 12-14.
27. *Doctrine and Covenants* 17 18.
28. *Doctrine and Covenants* 46: 3.
29. Hebrews 6: 1.
30. *Doctrine and Covenants* 119. 2, 3.
31. Numbers 16: 8, 9.
32. See the *Priesthood Journal* for July, 1938, on subject of "Calls to the Ministry," etc.
33. Matthew 19: 14, 15.
34. *Doctrine and Covenants* 17: 19.
35. Matthew 11: 19.
36. *Doctrine and Covenants* 125: 3.
37. James 5: 13, 14.
38. See the *Priesthood Journal* for January, 1937, on subject of "Ministry of Health."
39. *Doctrine and Covenants* 17: 22, 23.
40. John 6: 53.
41. John 6: 51.
42. John 15: 1-10.
43. *Doctrine and Covenants* 17: 22, 23.
44. *Doctrine and Covenants* 46: 1, 2.
45. See *General Conference Resolution*, No. 91, on the subject of "Close Communion."
46. See the *Priesthood Journal* for July, 1935, on subject of the "Sacrament."
47. *Doctrine and Covenants* 111: 1.
48. *Doctrine and Covenants* 111; 49: 3.
49. *Doctrine and Covenants* 111: 1.
50. See the *Priesthood Journal* for January, 1939, on subject of "Marriage."

## THE ADMINISTRATION OF BRANCH SERVICES

**B**RANCH services are held for one primary purpose—to assist in the saving of souls. All that a service is, all that is done, all that it may attempt to offer is directly related to this major purpose. All that may be added for the sake of beauty, harmony, or continuity must be added with this purpose in mind. Services are not conducted merely that people might "go to church." Services are held in order that people might worship and that they might be taught and be further stimulated to action in the attempt to live the better way of life.

Two extreme types of worship are to be found in many of our branches. One tendency is that of simplicity which, when followed to the extreme, robs us of many of the finer qualities of worship. The other tendency is that of so mechanizing or ritualizing our worship that again we lose the very things for which we search when we worship. Somewhere between these two extremes we perhaps will find our ideal in worship services.

Each and every service of the branch should add to the spiritual momentum of the congregation. This is true not only of the so-called "regular" services but is true also of the other services which often tend to cater to special interest or age groups.

In the administration of the branch services the pastor will, of course, give attention first of all to the "regular" services, preaching, prayer service, and perhaps the communion service. What is expected of the pastor in the administration of the preaching service? What is the responsibility of the pastor in this regard?

What can he do to increase the attractiveness of these services?

### THE PREACHING SERVICE<sup>1</sup>

The preaching service should be a powerful service. No single institution in the church has stood the test of time any more successfully than that of preaching. Preaching will always have its important part in the activities of the branch program. As such, the responsibility of administering the preaching service is one of the major tasks of the pastor. We repeat that the pastor must efficiently administer the preaching service. This means more than the mere announcing of a few hymns, and the offering of a prayer, the presentation of a sermon or a speaker. It means the planning of a preaching service that will gear itself into the total program in a way that will definitely assist the church in its effort to achieve the results sought for. The wise pastor will visualize the needs of his congregation in the light of the major emphases of the two-year program (see chapter on "The Branch Program") and determine quite definitely just what is needed in the congregation. He may not set out the themes for each service but he will give a general direction to the preaching effort. How much of the preaching and presiding he will do himself is dependent upon local conditions. May it be said, however, that the pastor who actually gives tone and direction to the preaching services usually is the pastor who is active in the presiding and preaching program. There is value in continuity both in preaching and in presiding. A pastor can hardly hope to be a strong factor in the leadership of his branch if he delegates all of the first-hand congregational contact to other members of the priesthood.

It becomes very necessary that the pastor become very familiar with the ability of each member of the priesthood. To feel that every man of the priesthood should take his turn at preaching is to say that they are all qualified for this task. It is very doubtful if all men who are called to the priesthood are called to do congregational preaching. If the branch program is properly functioning there will be sufficient preaching being done in family meetings and in small missions in the neighborhood to give ample opportunity for the inexperienced to gain his initial experience in presenting the gospel in a public or quasi-public manner. Congregations often die, especially from a missionary standpoint, where too much of the congregational preaching is placed upon the shoulders of men who are not qualified or who will not make the proper preparation for the task. You cannot afford to sacrifice the congregation just to give one man experience.

Let preaching assignments be made well in advance of the preaching date if possible. Weeks are often required even by the experienced preacher to prepare a sermon that is truly representative of our work. It is no disgrace if a member of the priesthood is not a public preacher. Many preachers cannot sing, yet no one feels that he is shirking his duty because he does not take the tenor solo in the morning anthem. Some of the best visiting priesthood that we have ever known were not public ministers. Some of the best local missionaries we have ever known were not public preachers. They did do an outstanding job of ministering to the people in their homes and through that ministry were able to bring many fine souls into the kingdom. The pastor will very prayerfully determine who can and who cannot work in each field of ministry and then encourage them to make their major contribution in that field, not completely excluding, how-

ever, any other fields of ministry into which they might on occasion step.<sup>2</sup>

Upon the pastor rests the responsibility of providing the proper balance in the preaching services. His missionary plans will determine what and how extensive the demands for missionary preaching will be. For this task he will choose his best missionary speakers. The souls of men are too precious to lose in half-hearted missionary preaching efforts. Make them the best that the congregation will provide.<sup>3</sup>

The pastoral needs of the congregation will also be provided for with the same foresight and systematic planning. Again the importance of the task is such that those best qualified to minister in the pastoral field will be called on for the burden of the work. The pastor must find his place in this work and should not fail to carry his full responsibility in the preaching ministry.

In administering the preaching service the pastor finds himself confronted with the task of providing music. Fortunate is he if he has a full musical organization that will co-operate with him in the perfecting of the service. Need it be said that the music should be but a supporting factor in the preaching service? It will be much better to have simple music that contributes to the spirit of the occasion and actually gives assistance to the speaker than the best soloist in town who sings to be seen and heard and whose offering is not in harmony with the spirit of the hour. In this field the pastor must give leadership of the type which will assure the service that its important mission of preaching will not be relegated to second place in favor of the choir or soloists.<sup>4</sup>

Many services are likewise greatly benefited by the proper choice of those who are to pray. What we said of the preaching mission of men is applicable also to

the task of public praying. Many men have developed the ability to pray in public. Many others simply repeat certain stock phrases without thought or preparation and call it prayer. Much of the success of the service depends upon the public prayers uttered in connection with them. All men who are to participate in public worship should be instructed in detail as to the different requirements of the invocation, the benediction, the pastoral prayer and the offertory. The wise pastor will choose carefully those who are to offer the public prayers, especially at the missionary meetings. The others he will train and develop that they too in time may carry a portion of this responsibility.

It should be mentioned in passing that the pastor also carries the responsibility of having the deacons so organized that the care of the building is not neglected. The personal contact and care of the regular attendants and visitors should be made in such a way as will add to the spirit of the hour. Much depends upon the attitude of those in charge—in fact the attitude of each person present is of importance to the whole service. The pastor will cultivate the proper attitude on the part of the congregation and encourage the spirit of friendliness. (See chapter on "The Duties of the Branch Priesthood," with reference to the deacon.)

With the general program in mind calling for missionary work, reclamation of inactives and the furthering of the financial program of the church due consideration must be given to see that each receives its proper proportion in the preaching emphasis. In this the pastor must take the lead and give direction.

#### THE PRAYER SERVICE<sup>5</sup>

Perhaps no service in the church ordinarily receives

less planning and less attention from the pastor than the prayer service. True it is that many pastors are not guilty of this delinquency and for this we are thankful. It still is true, however, that in all too many places the sum total of administration given the prayer service is the choosing of someone to preside after the congregation assembles. The lack of preparation can be covered up oftentimes. Too frequently are prayer services held with practically no preparation having been made for their success.

We are not forgetting the admonition that the various meetings should be conducted as the elders may be led. Because we believe in that so thoroughly we plead for advance preparation and consideration just as we plead for advance preparation on the part of the one who is to preach. Not that God can't bless the man in his ministry in the very moment of his utterance but that history bears out the contention that God blesses the man most who makes the most effort to prepare. Advance preparation gives the spirit of enlightenment more opportunity to leaven the thinking and reasoning of the one about to minister than does the "minute man" emergency.

In administering the prayer service the wise pastor will ask himself just what it is he is trying to have happen in the prayer service. What kind of worship and instruction does he feel is needed most? Just what will be of most value in the prayer service in relation to the general program of the church and branch? The order of the service is not so important. It is the spiritual movement which brings light and understanding and enables the soul, burdened with the toils of life, to find fresh hope and courage that really counts. Will Saints be stimulated to share the gospel with their friends? Will others be stimulated to go out and attempt to rewin those who are cold and indifferent?

It is in this service that especial attention should be given to the fourth point in the general program: "Development of spiritual forces of the church through continuous prayerful support of the program as a whole." It is in this service that such powerful spiritual movements should be developed that men and women feel the spirit of worship in a way that attracts them to each weekly meeting. The attendance at this meeting should be comparable with that of the preaching service.

The responsibility of protecting the congregation from the misuse or abuse of the spiritual gifts must not be forgotten. All too often the pastor, rather than to risk offending someone, allows some well-meaning but misguided person to mislead those not too well versed in the operation of the gifts. Such abuse, if allowed to continue, weakens the faith of all the Saints, and prayer services where such are allowed to continue will lose their power and value as a kingdom-building influence. The pastor should be tolerant but he must also be firm. He has no moral right to allow to go unchallenged that which he knows to be detrimental to the work. The old alibi "everyone understands So-and-so" is but an admission of weakness on the part of the pastor. People may understand the offender yet the continuance of such demonstrations cheapens the work and breaks the faith of even the most loyal.

#### PRIESTHOOD MEETINGS

The pastor who learns to appreciate his priesthood and to train them and use them is well on the way to success. While it is his responsibility to give general direction to the branch program it is his privilege also to enjoy the value of the counsel of the priesthood of the branch. In the process of administering his branch

program he will come to enjoy and appreciate the regular priesthood meetings. Here he will outline his general plans for the work of the branch. Here will he enjoy the constructive criticism of his brethren in the confidence of the official circle of fraternity. Here he will pour out his soul to his brethren as he attempts to train them more fully for their task. He will realize that though they may be inadequate for the task in many ways yet they are God's choice of leadership for his congregation, and through them will come such supplementary leadership as they may be able to give. Strong or weak they *are* the priesthood.

In the administration of the priesthood meeting the pastor will give special attention as to just how the members of the priesthood can make their best contribution to the general program. He will recognize that one of the big tasks of priesthood is to be able to assist the membership as they in turn attempt to minister. If the membership attempts to make many new contacts the priesthood must be trained to complete these conversions. If the membership is active in the work of reclamation the priesthood must be trained to minister in these homes and stabilize the home life of these people. The proper members of the priesthood must be assigned to the task of furthering the financial program. In other words the priesthood meeting is the pastor's contact with his first lieutenants. He may have chosen two of the number whom he calls counselors, and who stand in an even closer relationship, yet in a general way each priesthood member is his counselor. If the branch also has a branch council, consisting of priesthood and departmental heads, the priesthood are invaluable in assisting these various persons of responsibility in applying the general program to the work of their respective departments.

## SPECIAL SERVICES<sup>8</sup>

Under this head we might list business meetings, baptismal services, confirmation meetings, funerals, weddings, in fact any service that has a definite relationship to the church. Here as in all others the pastor is the directing head. From him must come the general supervision that gives protection to the church and spiritual attractiveness to the services.

In the conducting of business meetings care must be taken that the proper contact is being established with superior officers. This differs much in stakes, districts, and unorganized territory. A complete understanding must be had with the next higher administrative officer so that no friction will result. These meetings must feel the leadership of the pastor. Who is better qualified to give direction and leadership to the selection of a corps of workers who will be able to accomplish most, than the pastor? The pastor who fails to give this leadership is failing to give to his branch that which they have a right to expect.

All the other special meetings should be under the general administration of the pastor. It is neither to be expected nor desired that the pastor should officiate at all of the marriages, preach all of the funeral sermons or bless all of the babies. It is to be expected, however, that all of these services will be performed with the full knowledge and under the general direction of the pastor. In so doing some safeguards can be thrown around the good name of the church and some measure of unanimity of opinion can be developed as to policy in connection with various practices.

It is not too uncommon for one elder to refuse to perform a marriage ceremony for one couple only to have another elder jump at the chance. The super-

vision of the pastor and the co-operation of the priesthood will do much towards establishing some more stable basis of procedure in many things. This same principle holds true in practically every field of ministry. The pastor *must* be the pastor.

The administration of church services then demands the close attention of the pastor. He will need to be careful lest he find himself so completely buried beneath a mass of detail that the organization absorbs his time and energy and he finds that he has but little left to actually give to the spiritual needs of the kingdom. If he properly visualizes his task and then rallies the other members of the priesthood to his support, his administration will, in many fields, gradually limit itself to the more general task of giving only general direction. This adjustment is contingent upon his ability to develop priesthood who will accept and carry these lesser responsibilities co-operatively.

His is the task of administering the services that the program of the church might be furthered. Then and only then will his branch begin to live and grow. He must take the best material that he has available and attempt the expression of the gospel way of life through them. Herein lies his opportunity and his hope.

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1. *The Church and Evangelism*, p. 336.
  2. *Priesthood Journal*, January, 1936.
  3. *Priesthood Journal*, October, 1934, p. 26.  
*The Church and Evangelism*, p. 344.
  4. *Priesthood Journal*, October, 1937.
  5. *Priesthood Journal*, January, 1936.
  6. *Priesthood Manual*, pp. 41-43, 51.  
*Priesthood Journal*, July, 1935.

## THE PLACE AND ADMINISTRATION OF THE EVANGELISTIC PROGRAM

IN what is often referred to as the constitutional law of the church, the Lord says, "Behold, verily I say unto you, I give unto you this first commandment, that ye shall go forth in my name . . .; and ye shall go forth in the power of my Spirit, preaching my gospel . . .; and ye shall go forth baptizing with water, saying, Repent ye, repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."<sup>1</sup> Thus is set forth the "first commandment" of the law that was given in harmony with the Lord's promise to the early Saints. They went to the Ohio as they had been commanded,<sup>2</sup> and there they received this basic instruction following humble supplication by the elders and supported in faith by the people.

### "GO FORTH" IS BASIC TO LIFE

Basic to life and its successful expression in all the spheres in which it moves is this commandment to "go forth." The tiny seed that is planted in the ground must follow this principle or it will die. It is not enough, however, that it shall grow and flower for a time, but it must in some way perpetuate itself by producing its kind or it will cease to be with the fading of its flower. Physical man with his most marvelous body is what he is because other organisms have contributed to his life by going forth. They reach out beyond themselves that he might live. Shall he, then, after he receives life from other sources, refuse to carry out this principle of living by giving, in confining his interests to and for himself? To do so will dwarf and canker his soul. This is out of harmony

with the laws of life. Man, the highest form of all God's creation, cannot live successfully and helpfully by following this kind of procedure. He was not created to be a parasite, as one who goes through a revolving door on the push of others.

The Apostle Paul, in his Roman epistle, says that "the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made."<sup>3</sup> What we see, then, in the visible things about us is a lesson of the way Divinity moves in the realm of the invisible or spiritual. In the measure that we reach out for and into the lives of others will we be able to reach in and strengthen ourselves. The person who lives to and for himself by spending his time, his money, and his energy that he might be made more comfortable and secure personally cannot be truly happy, nor is he secure. Happiness and security come only when one reaches out for that which is imperishable, and imperishable things are discovered only where eternal forces move and abide. To "go forth," therefore, is basic to the life of all things, and of individuals and groups of individuals in their organized efforts. This means that it is basic to our church life in all its phases.

Since men live more fully by giving, and since we have reason to build inthrusters only when we build proportionate outthrusters, the Lord has committed to us the sacred stewardship of seeing that the gospel, which is the "power of God unto salvation,"<sup>4</sup> shall be preached "unto all nations."<sup>5</sup> All men must someday hear the words of life, and one of the means that God will use to make this possible is that of human instrumentality. The church is the aggregation of devoted individuals to whom this responsibility has been given. Because this is his plan, Christ was made "head of the body," the church, "that in all things he might have

the pre-eminence,"<sup>8</sup> and lead the way in the evangelization and salvation of the world.

### SPIRITUAL REVIVAL NEEDED

With civilization in the throes of tremendous change there is urgent need for a spiritual revival. This is necessary if men are to succeed in keeping their poise in the midst of so much distraction. Sin must be recognized as sin, and a desire must be planted in the hearts of men to overcome it and to grow in the grace of him who has championed the way we are challenged to follow. A spiritual revival must come to preserve the good we possess and to give us a clearer sense of direction in the future. We must be saved from our baser selves, and give our better natures an unfettered opportunity to unfold. This is basic to all human needs, and only as it is recognized first by the individual will society be able to rise from its present status to its exalted estate. Man is first a spiritual being, and this spiritual revival must first move him in spirit before it can affect him in secondary things. Material salvation and permanent security are assured only when the spirit is awakened to righteousness.

### TEACHING AND PREACHING MUST BE BASIC

As we "go forth" in our evangelistic work we must always remember that our teaching and preaching must be basic. Our calling is not to teach and preach the theories and philosophies of men, but the gospel of Jesus Christ. There is no other message that can adequately meet every human need. It is "the power of God unto salvation."

### A TASK FOR ALL

This task of warning others is one that requires the unqualified support of every ordained man, every

department, and every member.<sup>7</sup> It is not a responsibility belonging only to the priesthood. It is the first function of the church, consequently to every quorum and to every member it is of vital and primary concern. Upon its success and the devotion of the church in carrying out the activities concerned with it rests the life of the church of today and of tomorrow, both in that which might be considered its external and internal functions—the evangelization of the world and the zionization of the church.

The church must not be satisfied with its present numbers, nor think for a moment that the accomplishment of our twofold program can be realized with so few numbers. The army of the Lord must become very great both numerically and spiritually to meet victoriously the challenge of our day.<sup>8</sup>

### *The Priesthood to Give Leadership:*

In this as in all other church activities those who have been ordained to specific responsibilities should be found leading the way. Their examples of action will wield a greater influence than verbal or penned instruction.<sup>9</sup> Theirs is both the responsibility and the privilege of engaging in the work of raising men up from the wreckage wrought by sin to a plane of higher living, and also of giving direction to a great body of men and women, who hold no priestly office, but who are moved by a deep and flaming conviction in their efforts to win men to Christ.

### *The Pastor in Charge:*

Work of such magnitude must have supervision. Naturally this is the charge of the one who has been elected pastor of the branch. Prayerfully and understandingly he should approach this task determined to

give the best he possesses and to challenge his associates to do the same. He will frequently have occasion to consult with the district president, or the stake president, if in a stake, and at times, too, with the apostle or apostles in charge of the field, or with whomsoever the apostle or apostles in charge may designate to represent them. This co-operation will make for unity of endeavor on the part of the branch and district or stake officers without which no lasting and worth-while results can be obtained.

There may be times when general church appointees will go into branches or missions on definite missionary assignments which will require them to take charge of the campaigns, or certain aspects of them. When this is done, the pastors will, of course, co-operate with them, and certainly the appointees will endeavor to work in co-operation with the pastor and his associates.

### *The Priesthood the Pastor's First Associates:*

The associates to whom the pastor should first look for help are the ordained men of his branch. Their callings designate them as his assistants and collaborators in every phase of branch endeavor. Nevertheless, they should be given direction, but this direction should not smack of superiority or dictatorship. It should be given in humility and with a sureness of one's position and ability; in fact, in such a way as to bring out the finest quality of ministry each ordained man is capable of rendering. To do otherwise will tend to stifle the members of the priesthood, and the pastor will be fortunate, indeed, if he escapes active opposition from them. Where friction and consequent lack of co-operation exist no branch program can succeed. Each man must feel that in his pastor he has a sympathetic,

understanding, capable, and co-operative leader. He will then tax his own strength to the limit to see achieved the goal set up in the program.

We should remember that all men do not possess the same talents and should not be required to minister in the same capacity and way. It is a wise pastor who seeks to understand his priesthood and directs their ministry in the most helpful way to them and to those to whom they minister. In a missionary endeavor in a branch the priest and elder should work together, the priest assisting the elder, for this is in harmony with the law.<sup>10</sup> The teacher and the deacon are not called to minister to the nonmember in the same way the priest and elder are.<sup>11</sup> It may be, too, that every priest and every elder cannot qualify to "go forth" as the missionary minister must do, and if this is the case, the wise pastor will see that they are placed where they can render the most effective service.

### *The Departments Have a Place:*

The departments can make a distinctive contribution to the branch missionary effort. The pastor should not hesitate to go to them with his program when he is prepared to put it into operation, and departmental leaders who should always be interested in the total branch work will give him their whole-hearted support in marshalling to his side all who can help. The splendid ministry of the departments in a well-planned evangelistic effort in a branch or mission cannot be minimized. Here, indeed, are helps to the church through priestly supervision for which the Lord has made provision.<sup>12</sup>

### METHODS

Perhaps one of the greatest mistakes we make is to refuse to accept new methods that have real value

in them. It is so much easier to go along with the old worn-out methods we have used for so many years. However, in our desire to be progressive and up-to-date we should be careful and not forsake old methods that are still valuable.

### *Public Preaching:*

This is a very old method and one that has proved its worth throughout the years. The magnetic personality of a public speaker will always have an appeal. It will always be foremost among the methods used in presenting the gospel. Not every minister, however, is capable of functioning in this capacity, but, no doubt, there are those among us whose abilities in this direction have not yet been discovered.<sup>13</sup>

### *The Weekly Missionary Sermon:*

In most branches and missions Sunday night is an excellent time to present our message in an evangelistic way. Usually local men must carry this service, at least in many places. The pastor should be a discerning leader and select those who are qualified to occupy. In this all can render invaluable service and make the meeting an outstanding success.<sup>14</sup>

### *The Series:*

In some branches the pastors have, with the help of their qualified local priesthood, conducted series of meetings which have been very successful. Able local preachers from near-by branches can sometimes assist the resident priesthood in a very valuable way. Whenever this is done the need of proper co-operation with those in charge must not be overlooked. The series is the responsibility of every ordained man, and every member, man, woman, and child in the branch. Active

members are the best advertising for successful missionary work. Local men will be under the necessity of doing more of this type of work in the future than in the past. When the general church appointee goes into a branch to conduct a series he should have the full co-operation of every one.<sup>15</sup>

### *Cottage Meetings:*

Many of our fine branches are the result of cottage meetings held in the homes of members and non-member friends. It requires devotion and deep interest on the part of those who open their homes for such meetings. Those in charge and those attending should always be considerate and appreciative of this fine hospitality, and never at any time should they violate the rights and dignity of the homes where the services are held. In large and scattered branches cottage meetings afford an excellent opportunity to renew interest in members and to get the gospel before our neighbors and friends. They also give members of the priesthood training that they might not get in any other way.<sup>16</sup>

### *Family Meetings:*

Here the minister has close contact with his prospects. So intimate a ministry is not possible with the entire family through any other means. The family meeting is more informal than the cottage meeting and may take on the nature of a Bible study or a semi-religious meeting. This method is a splendid way to fraternize with those we seek to teach the gospel. A number of missionary-minded members of the church have succeeded in converting whole families by working with them in this way, and others have done commendably by seeking families with whom they

were not acquainted and going into their homes with the specific purpose in the mind of teaching them the gospel.<sup>17</sup>

### *Personal Evangelism:*

Every member of the church can be a personal evangelist and succeed in bringing the light of the restored gospel to those with whom he associates. If our religion lives fruitfully within us, we will seek to take it to others that its powers may live also in them.<sup>18</sup>

### *The Prospect List:*

Every branch should have a live prospect list. Each member and each department should be concerned about building it up. Even members of some branches have lists of their own which they have created and with which they work faithfully. Worth-while results have been achieved as a result of this method in some places.<sup>19</sup>

### *The Use of Literature:*

Our literature can be made a potent factor in our branch missionary work in evangelizing our communities and re-evangelizing our membership. The written message in the hands of a devoted branch membership will preach many sermons to people who cannot be reached in the public meeting, and frequently open the way for a more personal ministry.<sup>20</sup>

### *Missions:*

Large branches should use this method in establishing the work in different sections of their communities in cities and the country. Branches can be built up through missions, and many more people who would

not otherwise be working will have an opportunity to express themselves in a very helpful way. Missions, of course, do not possess legislative rights and are not self-governing. They are under the immediate supervision of the president of the branch. Members of the priesthood and departmental workers should consider it a privilege to work with him in sponsoring a mission. They should gladly respond to his call for ministry. The branch should be a missionary unit. For this purpose does it exist.<sup>21</sup>

Districts and stakes may also sponsor missions within their jurisdictions, and if at all possible the branches should co-operate with the district and stake presidents to see that every effort necessary is made to make them a success. It is the right of the one in charge to call upon his workers for help in this and all worthy and helpful projects. All who can should consider it a privilege to respond to such calls. There should be the most congenial relationship between those in charge and the priesthood and members.<sup>22</sup>

## CONCLUSION

Our conclusion, therefore, is that evangelism has a very definite place in our pastoral program. Without it the branch, the district, and the stake cannot live. It is imperative that we reach out into others' lives if we ourselves are to grow. Pastors, who have the responsibility of directing missionary activities within their jurisdictions, should be men of initiative, courage, and faith. They should have a passion for the souls of men. They should seek to minister in such a way and with such a spirit that each officer and each member will not be satisfied with present accomplishments, but will try to achieve bigger things for Christ and his church. All should seek to carry people

on their hearts more than they now do,<sup>23</sup> remembering at all times the "first commandment" to the church is to "go forth."

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1. *Doctrine and Covenants* 42: 2.
2. *Doctrine and Covenants* 38: 7, 39. 4.
3. Romans 1: 20.
4. Romans 1: 16.
5. Luke 2 10, 29-32, Revelation 14 6.
6. Colossians 1: 18.
7. *Doctrine and Covenants* 38 9.
8. *Doctrine and Covenants* 102: 8, 9.
9. *Church History*, volume 1, p 523 (Joseph Smith, Jr., works on Kirtland Temple).
10. *Doctrine and Covenants* 17. 10
11. *Doctrine and Covenants* 17: 8-11.
12. 1 Corinthians 12 28.
13. See *The Priesthood Journal* for January, 1936, on subject of Preaching and Sermon Construction.
- 14-21. *Missionary Manual*.
22. *Missionary Manual*; *Priesthood Journal*, January, 1942.
23. Alma 16: 219-222.

## THE PASTORAL RELATIONSHIP TO THE DEPARTMENTS

### THE CHURCH A DEVELOPING ORGANIZATION

As men and women began to respond to the message of Jesus, he found it necessary to call other men to be his helpers and representatives. As the church grew numerically, one can also see the gradual unfoldment of the plan of organization. So in keeping with this unfoldment we read in Ephesians 4: 11: "And he gave some, apostles; and some prophets; and some evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers."

The purposes for an organization of this type are also set out in this same letter to the Ephesians: "For the perfecting of the Saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ."

Here in a brief yet concise manner Paul sets out the pastoral functions:

- (1) Nurturing and developing the Saints.
- (2) Performing the saving ordinances—missionary work.
- (3) Instructing and teaching the membership.

These purposes also explain the reasons for branch existence. Naturally the general responsibility for carrying out these functions falls upon the men ordained and set apart to serve in the ministry. The very nature of their calling makes them accountable for those to whom they minister. They must "feed" the sheep; they must "oversee" the flock.

Paul expressly places upon the elders the responsibility of overseeing the branches. "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with

his own blood.”<sup>3</sup> They are by *divine calling* as *overseers*, to *feed* the church of God.

### THE PASTOR IS OVERSEER

It is not straining any interpretation if this function of overseeing the church of God is ascribed to the pastor of any branch. By choice of the membership, and by virtue of the spiritual prerogatives inhering in his call, the pastor is to oversee all activities connected with the branch. A revelation directs that high priests, elders, priests, teachers, or deacons may preside (*Doctrine and Covenants* 120: 2).

### THE NEED FOR DEPARTMENTS

With the growth of branch membership many needs arise. The membership engages in different activities, all having bearing upon their spiritual and religious welfare. In consequence of these developments there have developed within the church organization departments, charged with specific responsibilities and activities. These are the church school; the women's department; the Zion's League; children's activities such as Blue Birds, Orioles, Cubs and Boy Scouts; music department; etc. The pastor and even all of the priesthood cannot effectively carry out these responsibilities, neither should they want to. The membership needs to develop themselves through spiritual exercises and participation as well. This they can do through the departments. The departments are some of the "helps" referred to by Paul.<sup>4</sup> They are not an end in themselves, but a means to an end, the end being the nurturing and perfecting of the Saints. The departments are not separate organizations within the branch; through division of labor and needs they have specialized functions to carry out. As such there

should be understanding of the branch program on the part of the departmental leaders and a unified effort to relate the purposes of the departments to the branch and the general church program.

### THE PASTOR AND THE DEPARTMENTS

A wise pastor is not a dictator. He does not dominantly assert his will to the exclusion of all other considerations. Instead he should be farsighted, patient, co-operative with his fellow workers and a good co-ordinator of branch activities. He will seek to plan the steps by which the branch objectives may be reached. Having been sustained by the people, there is reposed in him the responsibility of developing the spiritual life of the membership.

If the pastor has counselors, it is well and proper that they should together consider the plans for the development of the branch: what the program shall be, what goals shall be set, and what needs shall be met. This does not mean that the counselors are to override the pastor in his planning for to him is given the responsibility of leading. They are to counsel with him.

It is well, in order that there might be unity and co-operation, that the priesthood next be given an opportunity to consider the program, making their suggestions for the improvement of the program of development before the branch. After this is done, the same should be presented to the departments for their consideration and co-ordination of their efforts towards the branch objectives. (See chapter on "The Framework of the Branch.")

### THE BRANCH COUNCIL

In some places a branch council has developed. This is an excellent addition for it is here that all depart-

mental leaders can meet with the pastor, his counselors and possibly the priesthood, and through mutual sharing of responsibilities, co-ordinate the activities of the branch. In this way, departments will not tend to run aloof from the branch in some direction other than that planned. The pastor presides over the council. The pastor, as overseer, knows what is being accomplished or attempted in the women's department, or church school, etc., vice versa, the church school leader or the Zion's League leader will not plan something that is contrary to the scheduled program of the branch. For example, if one goal in the branch is a 10 per cent addition to the membership, through this means of co-operation the church school, the Zion's League, the women's department, etc., can develop their plans for participation in the branch missionary endeavor to reach the goals. It is the pastor's privilege and duty to consult with the leaders of departments to encourage, to enthuse and to co-ordinate these activities.

### A BRANCH CONSCIOUSNESS

When the departments meet in their respective places and enter into activities properly belonging to them, it should be remembered that it is the "branch" meeting in this particular area of activity. A "branch" consciousness can be developed by a wise pastor co-operating with the departmental leaders. He shows interest in what is being done and endeavors to advise and stimulate as much as possible. It follows, too, that departmental leaders will need to co-operate and seek as well as welcome the advice of the pastor and his counselors in matters affecting them.

## CONCLUSION

As overseer of all the flock, the pastoral arm of the branch is concerned with departmental activities and he should promote these activities by his personal interest, advice and co-operation at all times. Likewise upon departments is placed the responsibility of co-operation and conformance so that being ". . . fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love."<sup>5</sup>

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1. Ephesians 4 11.
  2. Ephesians 4 12
  3. Acts 20: 28.
  4. 1 Corinthians 12· 28.
  5. Ephesians 4 16.

# THE BRANCH PROGRAM OF FINANCE\*

## GENERAL CHURCH FINANCE

In order to appreciate fully the place of the financial law in our church, it is important that we first understand the responsibility placed upon the church to preach the gospel in all the world and to provide a ministry to the people that will perfect them in the ways of righteousness. It is not only charged with the task of affecting our regeneration and ultimate redemption, but it has the responsibility of so changing our attitudes and lives that the world in which we live will eventually emerge a richer and better place for living. Our hope of the achievement of our goals is based on the promise that if the church will perform its duty the kingdoms of this world will become "the kingdom of God and his Christ."

Having imposed upon the church such a sweeping and exacting responsibility, God must have made some definite provision for its maintenance and enlargement. It would not be consistent with his nature to leave such an important financial requirement to either impulse or caprice. The Father's business, in all its aspects, must be conducted in harmony with genuine business principles. We see the financial law, therefore, as an integral part of God's law, the primary purpose of which is to stimulate spiritual growth in the individual by teaching him a sense of stewardship responsibility touching the use and management of material things as they surround him day by day and to make him see their relationship to the growth of the church.

The teaching elements of the financial law include the following:

1. Filing the first financial or annual statement.
2. Payment of the tithe.
3. Making an offering.
4. Consecration of surplus.

## LOCAL CHURCH FINANCE

The success of the general church is largely dependent upon the alert, devoted, and active branches of its people. The branch thus becomes an important part of the general movement, also making local financial support necessary if it is to give adequate service to the spiritual and social requirements of its people and its community. This support will involve such indispensable needs as housing, equipment, materials, as well as other requirements of any active group.

## FINANCIAL ORGANIZATIONS

Branches and other local groups are supported by offerings made to local treasurers, who are the custodians of such funds. These offerings usually come under the division of "Local Expense" or "Building Fund." The amounts contributed towards such funds should be based upon the need of the group as set forth in its budget.

There are various ways in which the administration of local finances can be successfully organized. In large branches or groups, where an active bishop is available, the bishop and his counselor should have charge of the finances. Where no bishopric is available, a finance committee or a board of stewards composed of representative people of the group may be appointed. All things being equal, it is desirable that available deacons be used on this committee or board as far as possible. It is customary and essential that

the branch presidency sit and work with the finance committee as an ex officio member of the group.

The purpose of the finance committee is to determine the financial policies, to prepare a budget and to devise means for securing income necessary to meet the requirements of the group. Obviously care should be taken to select capable persons having an appreciation of the needs of all ages of the branch. Such a committee will be enabled to consider sympathetically the budget requests from the various department leaders and at the same time keep expenditures within reasonable bounds. An active, interested committee of this sort will keep a branch well supplied with revenue for the conduct of its business and provide for the natural expansion of its program.

In smaller groups the branch president, treasurer, and possibly one other representative person can well comprise this finance committee to meet the problems arising in such groups.

### THE USE OF A BUDGET

In technical language the budget means "making an annual statement relative to finance." We use it as a means of forecasting the costs of operating our church activities for a certain period, usually for a year. It not only enables a branch to plan its expenditures, but it enables it to organize its resources for the most effective and intelligent use of the same. Moreover, it enables a branch to systematize its affairs by which its general course is shaped and its main activities are determined. The use of the budget is no longer an experiment, for time and again it has proved itself to be an indispensable instrument for the successful administration of church finance. It will enable the branch to operate on a cash basis.

## PREPARING THE BRANCH BUDGET

Budget proposals should be prepared by those in closest touch with the work. In some places it is customary for the branch president, collaborating with the treasurer, to present to the various department heads a budget request blank by which they can indicate the expected needs of their respective departments for the ensuing year. When these estimates are received, the branch president and treasurer with their assistants should prepare a budget to be presented to the finance committee or board of stewards for final scrutiny before it is submitted to the branch for consideration and approval. The branch has the right to make such changes as the majority may wish; the budget is not valid unless it is approved by the formal action of the branch.

In preparing the budget several points should be observed:

- A. How much money will be needed for conducting the branch affairs during the next fiscal period?
- B. What money is on hand and from what source is more to be expected and how much?
- C. What shall be the amount appropriated to each function of the branch?

The budget should include such items as:

For operating expense:

- |                        |                    |
|------------------------|--------------------|
| 1. Pastor's allowance. | 6. Music.          |
| 2. Janitor.            | 7. Library.        |
| 3. Fuel.               | 8. Repairs.        |
| 4. Lights.             | 9. Interest.       |
| 5. Water.              | 10. Miscellaneous. |

For church school:

- |                 |                   |
|-----------------|-------------------|
| 1. Quarterlies. | 3. Equipment.     |
| 2. Supplies.    | 4. Miscellaneous. |

For general purpose:

- |                      |                   |
|----------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Missionary funds. | 3. Miscellaneous. |
| 2. District funds.   |                   |

For building fund:

- |                  |                  |
|------------------|------------------|
| 1. New building. | 2. Improvements. |
|------------------|------------------|

Other items may be included as needed to meet any local situation. Each branch should make provision to care for the expenses of district officers and missionaries by having the items included in the budget and by making the funds available when needed.

### RAISING THE BUDGET

There is always a good reason why a branch is successful in its financial endeavors. Inevitably it is because the workers are acquainted with the task to be performed and are united in it.

After carefully selecting the workers for soliciting funds, arrangements should be made to canvass the branch four or five weeks before the financial year opens. A meeting of the workers should be called in which they can be informed as to the nature of the budget and the requirements of the church to enable them to answer any questions that may be asked. If possible, inform them also of the nature and extent of response of the members they are visiting. The attitude of the thinking giver is that of a careful investor, and the approach should be made upon that basis with full confidence in the solicitor's mission. There is no need for either begging or apologizing. Regular and proper contact between the priesthood

and members during the year will always make the financial campaign more pleasant and profitable.

It is important to have a well-understood system for the collecting of finances. Many local groups adopt a system which is particularly adapted to their own needs. However, the envelope system has been generally used with excellent results. The duplex envelope, which can be obtained through the office of the Presiding Bishopric at a nominal cost, has been quite successful because its use tends to deepen the interest in worship and promote recognition of one's responsibility to the Lord so that he will have a definite share of the weekly income.

### THE TREASURER

Only one treasurer is necessary for a branch. All funds, whether of the branch, church school, organized class, etc., should be under the supervision of this treasurer. The law of the church contemplated the ordination of bishops in large branches and districts.<sup>1</sup> When an active bishop is available, he should be placed in charge of the finances. If no such bishop is available, then a deacon, all things being equal, should be selected as treasurer. In large branches the treasurer may well have one or more assistants, designated as financial secretaries. The financial secretary assists only in the gathering of the funds to be turned over to the treasurer who is the custodian thereof.

It should be borne in mind that the continued success of church finance will depend very largely upon the efficiency of the treasurer selected. This position is one of great responsibility, and the person chosen to occupy it should be one of the highest reputation whose name and administration of his duties will inspire confidence. Honesty, efficiency, interest, and

diligence are indispensable qualifications to be had by any successful treasurer.

The treasurer or his assistants should be in possession of receipt books at all times and issue receipts at the time an offering or payment of a pledge is made to him. He should not under any circumstances trust to memory such contributions, because it is not safe. Standard receipt books prepared by the general church can be had at a small cost.

#### BRANCH BANK ACCOUNTS

The treasurer should deposit all funds in the bank promptly when they are received, and he should exercise extreme care to permit no overdraft. It is his responsibility to safeguard trust funds for his church as carefully as those of a widow.

Above all, care should be taken by the treasurer to keep branch funds which are in the nature of trust funds separate from his personal funds. The account should be placed in the official name of the church including the name of the branch, for example:

#### THE REORGANIZED CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER DAY SAINTS,

----- Branch Building Fund

By -----

Treasurer

or

#### THE REORGANIZED CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER DAY SAINTS

Branch Expense Funds

By -----

Treasurer.

## KEEPING OF ACCOUNTS

It happens that the people of the church are very sensitive about their offerings to the church, and it is right that they should be. Much trouble and loss of confidence may result if the tabulation of money received is done carelessly or incorrectly. Since the treasurer is required to handle trust funds, he ought to understand how to account for them accurately. He need not always be an expert bookkeeper, but he should be ordinarily intelligent and accurate respecting these matters.

In cases where offerings are collected during church service or where the envelope system is used and the treasurer does not issue a receipt for each individual amount received from the contributor but does so periodically on an accumulative basis, it is always wise to have someone check funds with him. When money is taken from an envelope the amount removed should be noted thereon and these envelopes kept until an audit of his accounts has been completed. In order to check the record, the total amount of cash removed from the envelope should balance with the total of the amounts noted on the envelopes. These should also balance with the cash book which gives a three-way check.

In regard to the expenditures made from the church funds, it is always wise to have supporting papers or bills giving evidence of the treasurer's authority for making the expenditure. These papers should be kept as a part of the bookkeeping record and made available to the auditor for checking.

In addition to the keeping of accurate financial records there should be a complete and full report of receipts and expenditures made to the congregation at least once a year. It may be wise to report to the

finance committee or to the branch presidency in case of a small group, for a shorter period, but the congregation is entitled to know the status of its business affairs at least once a year.

In addition to making a complete report to the branch, the treasurer should insist on a periodic audit of his accounts. The church itself is under obligation to see that there is a reasonable audit made of its books.

It is a good plan to inform each member periodically, preferably quarterly, of the amount contributed to the various local funds. The Saints justifiably appreciate recognition for the good work they have done, and to those who unthinkingly permit their accounts to become delinquent the statement will serve as a reminder of their obligation. Such a notice is also a safeguard to the treasurer because it will afford opportunity for any member to call attention to any discrepancies that may appear respecting their own contributions. The following sample form can be used to an advantage.

At the close of the quarter ending .....,  
1942, your account stood as follows:

Local Expense	Building Fund
\$..... Balance due from previous quarter	\$.....
\$..... Amount due during quarter	\$.....
\$..... Total due at end of quarter	\$.....
\$..... Total paid during quarter	\$.....
\$..... Balance due now	\$.....

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\* A brief of material used in *Priesthood Journal*, July, 1941. Compiled largely from writings of former Presiding Bishopricks.

1. *Doctrine and Covenants* 117: 10.

For reference reading we recommend the following:

*Handbook of the Financial Law*, Presiding Bishopric, 1941.

*Priesthood Journal*, "Financing the Church," Presiding Bishopric, July, 1941.

*Church Finance*, William H. Leach, Cokesbury, 1928.















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